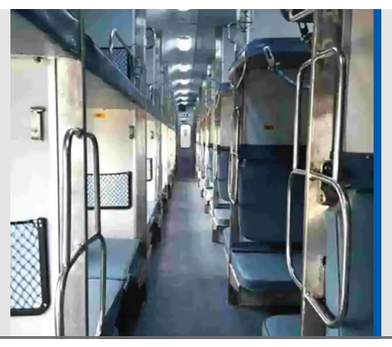
NATION

Woman gangraped in empty train coach

≫ Page: 4 ≪



BUSINESS

Capgemini buys WNS for $3.3B, eyes AI biz model

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SPORTS

Djokovic stays in quest for 25th Grand Slam title

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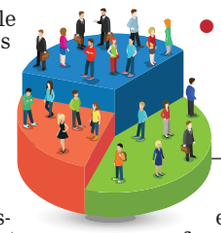
In a first, citizens will be able to self-enumerate in Census

NEW DELHI, 7 JULY

India is set to conduct its first-ever digital Census, with a special web portal being launched to enable citizens to self-enumerate during both phases of the exercise — the Houselisting and Housing Census (HLO) and Population Enumeration (PE).

For the first time, enumerators will collect data using mobile applications on Android and Apple devices. Citizens will also have the option to provide their own data through a dedicated online portal.



- For the first time, enumerators will collect data using mobile applications on Android and Apple devices. Citizens will also have the option to provide their own data through a dedicated online portal.

"This Digital Census is a transformational step towards modernising data collection. Technology will be used for gathering and transmitting information electronically, allowing for quicker availability of data," an official said.

Stringent data security protocols will be enforced during collection, transmission, and storage.

The Houselisting phase begins on 1 April, 2026, followed by Population Enumeration on 1 February, 2027. Caste data of household members will also be collected. The reference date for Census 2027 is 12am of 1 March, 2027, and 1 October, 2026, for Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, and snowbound areas of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

This will be the 16th Census overall and the 8th since Independence, officially notified on 16 June. The Registrar General of India (RGI) has launched a three-tier training plan for around 34 lakh enumerators and supervisors. States and Union Territories have been instructed to finalise administrative boundary changes by 31 December, 2025. Census operations require a three-month gap following the freezing of such boundaries to ensure accurate and consistent enumeration across the country. —*PTI*

SALAR UPCLOSE

Khader vows to disqualify MLAs over horse-trading

NAHEED ATAULLA
BENGALURU, 7 JULY

Karnataka Assembly Speaker UT Khader, the first Muslim and second-youngest to hold the post, said he will disqualify MLAs involved in horse-trading, stressing the Speaker's duty to uphold the Anti-Defection Law. In an interview with **Salar News**, Khader addressed BJP criticism of the Constitution's Preamble over the word 'socialist and secular', asserting the Constitution is supreme. Khader is part of a national panel discussing reforms to State Legislatures, including revival of the Defamation Act. A five-time MLA, he attributed coastal tensions to fear, not hate, and urged students to follow legal paths in the hijab row. Known for turning his car into an ambulance, he backs point-of-call status for Mangaluru Airport and supports a dog shelter at Vidhana Soudha.

—Salar News

More on Page 5

Trump threatens extra 10% tariffs on BRICS countries

Trump sends tariff letters, US says new levy rates from 1 Aug

NEW YORK/ WASHINGTON, 7 JULY

US President Donald Trump has threatened an additional 10 per cent tariff on countries aligning with what he termed "the anti-American policies of BRICS," escalating tensions following the group's summit in Brazil where leaders condemned tariff hikes and unilateral trade restrictions.

The warning follows BRICS' sharp criticism of rising tariffs—viewed as a veiled reference to Trump's protectionist trade stance. Without naming the US, BRICS' joint declaration expressed "serious concerns" over tariff hikes, stating they violate WTO rules, threaten global supply chains, and introduce uncertainty. The summit also criticised military strikes on Iran and avoided condemning Russia for its war in Ukraine.

Trump responded on his social media platform, saying, "Any country aligning itself with the anti-American policies of BRICS will be levied an added 10 per cent tariff." He also threatened a 100 per cent tariff on the bloc if they attempted to undermine the US dollar.

Trump confirmed that from Monday, the US would begin sending "tariff letters or deals" to around 12 to 15 countries, warning of elevated import taxes from 1 August unless new trade terms are finalised. This push comes before the 9 July deadline, with some flexibility hinted for nations negotiating "in good faith."

Since April, Trump has imposed a 10 per cent baseline import tax on all countries, alongside 50 per cent tariffs on steel and aluminium and 25 per cent on autos. Only the UK and Vietnam have reached deals so far. Vietnam secured duty-free access for its exports, while US goods entering Vietnam will face a 20 per cent tariff—down from a proposed 46 per cent.

The Trump administration is using these letters as leverage in broader trade negotiations. While Trump suggested deals with the EU and India could still be reached, he noted that sending letters "is easier" given the number of countries involved.

Canada, however, will not receive such a letter, US Ambassador Pete Hoekstra confirmed, citing resumed trade talks and the goal of finalising a new agreement by 21 July.

Trump later in the evening on Monday said he would impose a 25 per cent tariff on goods from Japan and South Korea starting on 1 August. —*PTI*

>>>More on Pages 3 and 6

Donald Trump
PHOTO: PTI

BRICS must secure critical minerals: PM

Rio de Janeiro, 7 July

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, addressing the BRICS Summit, urged member nations to secure supply chains for critical minerals and technologies, warning against their misuse for "selfish gain" or as "weapons." His comments come amid concerns over China's export restrictions and opaque policies in this sector.

Modi emphasised the need for areliable access to minerals like lithium, nickel, and graphite—vital for electric vehicles, drones, and batteries. He also called for global standards on artificial intelligence (AI) to ensure transparency, prevent misuse, and address bias and ethical concerns. —*PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

China miffed at Modi's b'day wish to Dalai Lama

BEIJING, 7 JULY

China on Monday expressed protest against Prime Minister Narendra Modi greeting the Dalai Lama on his 90th birthday and the attendance of Indian officials at the celebrations, stressing that New Delhi should fully appreciate Beijing's sensitivities on Tibet-related issues.

The position of the Chinese government on Tibet-related issues is consistent and clear, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said while replying to a question on the India honouring the Dalai Lama. "As is widely known, the 14th Dalai Lama is a political exile who has long engaged in anti-China separatist activities and seeks to separate Xizang (Tibet) from China under the cloak of religion," she said.

"India needs to be fully cognisant of the sensitivity of issues related to Xizang, see clearly the anti-China and separatist nature of the 14th Dalai Lama, honour the commitments India has made to China on issues related to Xizang, act prudently, and stop using those issues to interfere in China's internal affairs. China has protested to India regarding its actions," Mao said.

Prime Minister Modi on Sunday extended warm wishes to the Dalai Lama and said he has been an enduring symbol of love, compassion, patience and moral discipline. —*PTI*

OP SINDOOR: PAK RULES OUT CHINA'S HELP

ISLAMABAD, 7 JULY

Pakistan Army Chief Asim Munir on Monday criticised India for suggesting that Islamabad received external support during the four-day Operation Bunyanum Marsoos, saying such assertions are "factually incorrect".

In an address to the graduating officers at the National Defence University, Islamabad, Munir said any misadventure or attempt to undermine Pakistan's sovereignty will be met with a swift and resolute response without any constraints or inhibitions. "Insinuations regarding external support in Pakistan's successful Operation Bunyanum Marsoos are irresponsible and factually incorrect," he said. —*PTI*

SC to hear on EC's electoral rolls revision in Bihar

NEW DELHI, 7 JULY

The Supreme Court of India will hear petitions on 10 July challenging the Election Commission's decision to conduct a special intensive revision of electoral rolls in poll-bound Bihar. Senior advocates, including Kapil Sibal, argued that the process is unfeasible within the proposed timeline, citing that around four crore voters will need to submit documentation before 25 July. Petitioners contend the revision disproportionately affects vulnerable communities and violates several constitutional rights. The Election Commission initiated the revision to update the electoral roll, the last update dating back to 2003. —*PTI*

3 dead, 20 ill after drinking contaminated water in Yadgir

YADGIR, 7 JULY

Three people have died and over 20 are critically ill in Tippanadgi village of Surpur taluk, Yadgir district, following a surge in diarrhoea and vomiting cases, allegedly due to contaminated water. However, officials have downplayed the claims, saying the deaths were likely due to pre-existing ailments. The deceased are Devikemma Hotti, 60; Venkamma, 50; and Ramanna Pujari, 64, who had been admitted to various private and government hospitals around 10 days ago. Four others remain in critical condition and are undergoing treatment in Kalaburagi city. While several others have recovered, six are still hospitalised. —*Salar News*

>>>More on Page 2

Military coup likely in Pak as Munir plans to usurp Prez

ISLAMABAD, 7 JULY

It has been only two days since the 47th anniversary of General Zia-ul-Haq's infamous military coup of 5 July, 1977, but rumours are rife about an impending coup that could lead to the removal of President Asif Ali Zardari and Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir taking that position.

Pakistani media reports said General Munir, who was recently elevated to the rank of Field Marshal, could be eyeing the presidency, marking the transition of power. Pakistani journalist Syed's claims that General Munir was doing the ground work to take over the position from Asif Ali. —*PTI*

>>>More on Page 6

US to extradite Khalistani terrorist Happy involved in Punjab blasts

NEW DELHI, 7 JULY

Wanted Khalistani terrorist Harpreet Singh, alias Happy Passia, is set to be extradited from the United States to India in the coming days. Sources within Indian security agencies confirmed he will arrive at Delhi Airport under tight security.

Passia, a resident of Amritsar, Punjab, was arrested on April 17 in Sacramento, California, by US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), with support from the FBI and Indian agencies. He is wanted in with at least 16 terror attacks in Punjab, including hand grenade strikes on police stations and public institutions.

Indian authorities allege Passia has links with Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and the banned Khalistani outfit Babbar Khalsa International (BKI). He is also suspected of planning attacks on police facilities in the United States.

On 22 April, FBI Director Kash Patel posted on X: "Captured Harpreet Singh… involved in planning multiple attacks on police stations both in India and the US… Justice will be done."

India's National Investigation Agency (NIA) had announced a 5 lakh reward for his capture. He is wanted in over 30 criminal cases, including a grenade attack on a house in Chandigarh. —*Agencies*

Reuters account restored on X after suspension in India

NEW DELHI, 6 JULY

The Reuters News account on X was reinstated in India on Sunday, just a day after it was suspended due to a legal demand. X informed Reuters via email that it was no longer withholding access to the account in India, though details regarding the legal request were not provided. The Indian government's Press Information Bureau clarified that no agency had demanded the account's suspension and that discussions were underway with X to resolve the issue. The main Reuters account, boasting over 25 million followers globally, had been blocked since Saturday night. Another affiliated account, Reuters World, was also restored late on Sunday. —*Agencies*

BIHAR HORROR

5 of family beaten to death, burnt on suspicion of witchcraft

PURNEA, 7 JULY

In a case of superstition-fuelled violence, five members of a family were brutally murdered and their bodies burnt in Bihar's Purnea district on suspicion of practising witchcraft, police said on Monday.

The incident occurred on Sunday night in Tetma village. Preliminary investigations suggest the victims — Babu Lal Oraon, Sita Devi, Manjeet Oraon, Rania Devi, and Tapto Mosamat — were first beaten to death before their bodies were set ablaze in a bush. The accused are believed to be from the same extended family, police added.

DIG (Purnea) Pramod Kumar Mandal said two suspects have been arrested, and a manhunt is underway to nab the remaining perpetrators.

PHOTO: FREEPIK

The murders reportedly followed the death of a local man's son during a "jharfuk" (faith healing) ritual. The victim's family was blamed for the tragedy, with villagers accusing the women of being "daayans" (witches).

A 16-year-old survivor, Lalit, managed to escape and inform his maternal grandparents, who alerted police. Lalit recounted the horrific night, saying his family was mercilessly beaten before being burned. The charred remains were later recovered from a nearby water body.

Senior police officers, forensic experts, and a dog squad are at the scene investigating. The gruesome killings have sparked panic in the village, with many residents fleeing their homes in fear. —*Agencies*

INSPIRED BY DARSHAN

B'luru man thrashed over obscene texts

BENGALURU 7 JULY

A college student was allegedly kidnapped, stripped, and brutally assaulted on the outskirts of Bengaluru, after which eight people were arrested and later released on bail, police said on Monday.

The incident occurred on 30 June in Nelamangala taluk, police added.

The victim, Kushal, is a college student, was previously in a relationship with a minor girl from the same locality. However, the couple had broken up a few months ago, after which Kushal allegedly sent her obscene messages.

The girl later informed her friends, who contacted Kushal on the pretext of "resolving the matter amicably" and convinced him to meet them.

The accused kidnapped Kushal and took him to a secluded spot, where he was stripped and assaulted

- In the video, the accused people can be heard referring to Kushal as Renukaswamy.

On 30 June, the accused people allegedly kidnapped Kushal in a car and took him to a secluded spot, where he was "stripped and assaulted".

The group also threatened to kill him in the same manner as the recent high-profile murder of Renukaswamy, in which Kannada actor Darshan and his associates are accused.

The accused persons filmed the assault, and the videos have since gone viral on social media.

In the video, the accused people can be heard referring to Kushal as Renukaswamy and introducing themselves as "accused number one, two, and three."

The girl was also present at the scene and was seen instructing the group to "teach him (Kushal) a lesson," police added. —*PTI*

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Three Nigerians held in City with ₹4 crore drugs

BENGALURU, 7 JULY

Three Nigerian nationals have been apprehended in Rajanukunte, near Kempegowda International Airport in the City with authorities seizing 2.8kg of synthetic narcotics and nearly 400kg of hydro ganja valued at over Rs 4 crore. Bengaluru Rural Superintendent of Police, CK Baba, revealed the men had entered India on medical visas and were found to be overstaying. Following a thorough investigation and surveillance, police discovered the drugs concealed within cardboard sheets used for clothing packaging. The suspects, who arrived via Delhi in December 2024, have been charged under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. Authorities are continuing to investigate potential larger networks involving drug trafficking. *—PTI*

Man swept away in Cauvery river while taking selfie

MYSURU, 7 JULY

A 36-year-old autorickshaw driver from Mysuru, identified as Mahesh, was swept away in the Cauvery River near Sarva Dharma Ashram in Srirangapatna taluk on Sunday evening. Mahesh had visited the Krishna Raja Sagar (KRS) area with friends and reportedly slipped into the river while attempting to take a selfie. Despite efforts by his friends, he could not be rescued. Srirangapatna Police, along with expert swimmers from the fire and emergency services, launched a search operation on Monday. A case has been registered, and investigations are ongoing. *—Salar News*

Two die after bike hits railing on bridge in Mandya

MANDYA, 7 JULY

Two men lost their lives on Sunday after their motorcycle reportedly collided with the railing of a bridge over the Visvesvaraya Canal at Mandya in the State. The incident occurred around 2.30pm within the jurisdiction of the Koppa police station. According to law enforcement officials, the riders were returning to their village when the motorcyclist lost control while crossing the bridge, resulting in the bike crashing into the railing. Both men fell into the canal and died instantly, police confirmed. Details about the deceased are yet to be released. A case has been registered, and after autopsy, the bodies have been returned to their families. *—PTI*

Woman duped of ₹3.16 cr in 'digital arrest' fraud

MANGALURU, 7 JULY

A woman from Mangaluru in the State has fallen victim to a sophisticated scam, losing more than Rs 3.16 crore after being manipulated by fraudsters posing as police officers. The 40-year-old victim, who has chosen to remain anonymous, lodged a complaint with the Cyber Economic and Narcotics Crime (CEN) police station. The ordeal began on 6 June when the woman received a call from an individual claiming to be an officer from the National Crime Reporting Portal (NCRP). The caller alleged that a SIM card registered in her husband's name was being misused. The situation escalated as the call was transferred to several other individuals, including a person who posed as a public prosecutor. Over the subsequent weeks, the fraudsters obtained her personal and banking details, convincing her to transfer large sums of money with the assurance that it would be returned after verification. *—PTI*

K'taka declares sudden deaths notifiable disease

It is now a must to report such deaths and conduct autopsy

BENGALURU, 7 JULY

The Karnataka government has decided to classify sudden deaths as a "notifiable disease," mandating that such incidents be reported to the authorities and subject to compulsory post-mortems. This move follows a spate of heart attacks reported across the state, particularly in Hassan district.

Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao announced the decision at a press conference on Monday, stating, "Sudden deaths occurring outside hospitals must be notified to the government. Autopsy will be mandatory in these cases."

As part of the new measures, the government will ramp up health screenings for individuals above 15 years of age, including schoolchildren, at least once a year.

"Some people have congenital conditions, so early screening is essential," the minister said.

The state will also introduce a chapter on sudden deaths, heart attacks, and related diseases in school textbooks from the next academic year. A proposal has already been sent to the education department, Rao confirmed.

Further, training in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) will be rolled out to the public, aiming to improve immediate response to cardiac emergencies.

The minister also announced the expansion of the Puneeth Rajkumar Hrudaya Jyoti scheme, currently operational in 86 hospitals, to taluk-level hospitals. The scheme provides emergency treatment for sudden cardiac arrest cases.

Citing findings from an expert committee, Rao clarified that Covid-19, and not its vaccines, is more likely linked to the surge in heart attacks. He acknowledged that the virus has led to increased cases of diabetes, hypertension, and obesity.

Rao also addressed Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's controversial remarks linking Covid vaccines to heart attacks. "The CM's intent was not malicious; he only sought clarity on possible side effects," Rao said. He added that while India did not administer mRNA vaccines, studies abroad have linked them to mild cases of myocarditis. *—PTI*

Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao PHOTO: @DINESHGRAO/X

CM has no malafide intention against Covid jab: Minister

BENGALURU, 7 JULY

State Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao defended Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's controversial remarks linking covid-19 vaccination to a rise in heart attacks in Hassan district, stating that there was no malafide intent. The Chief Minister claimed that "hasty" vaccine approvals could correlate with increased mortality from heart conditions. His comments, which faced backlash from the BJP and prominent figures like Biocon's Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, aimed to spark discussions about vaccination side effects. An expert committee found no link between heart attack cases and prior covid-19 infection or vaccination, asserting the vaccines actually protect against long-term cardiac events. The committee had been established to probe heart-related fatalities, and their report dismissed "long covid" as a cause for the rise in sudden cardiovascular incidents among the youth. *—PTI*

OFFICIALS DOWNPLAY CASE

Contaminated water kills 3 in Yadgir, 20 critical

YADGIR, 7 JULY

Three people have died and over 20 are critically ill in Tippanadgi village of Surpur taluk, Yadgir district, following a surge in diarrhoea and vomiting cases, allegedly due to contaminated water. However, officials have downplayed the claims, saying the deaths were likely due to pre-existing ailments.

The deceased are Devikemma Hotti, 60; Venkamma, 50; and Ramanna Pujari, 64, who had been admitted to various private and government hospitals around 10 days ago. Four others remain in critical condition and are undergoing treatment in Kalaburagi city. While several others have recovered, six are still hospitalised, with 20 more reportedly in serious condition.

Health officials have stationed a team in the village and established a temporary health centre at the local Anganwadi Centre to provide immediate medical care.

Although residents blame contaminated drinking water, health authorities insist that the deaths were not conclusively linked to it. Samples from local water sources have been sent for laboratory testing, and the exact cause will be confirmed only after the reports are received.

District In-charge Minister Sharanabasappa Darshanapur visited Tippanadgi to inspect the situation. He interacted with officials and inspected the RO (Reverse Osmosis) water plant. Villagers voiced anger over the alleged negligence of the Gram Panchayat PDO, accusing him of failing to maintain hygiene and not visiting the area.

The Minister assured that an investigation is underway, and further action will be taken once the water test results are available. He also stated that preliminary findings suggest the deaths may not be linked to water contamination. *—Salar News*

Will take Oppn into confidence on GBA: DKS

BENGALURU, 7 JULY

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said the final report on the formation of corporations under the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) would be discussed in the Cabinet after taking Opposition leaders into confidence.

Speaking after a meeting with officials at Vidhana Soudha, Shivakumar said the proposed corporations would fall within BBMP limits, with plans for future expansion. "We must take all parties along and hold elections as early as possible," he said.

Regarding his meeting with Home Minister G Parameshwara on the Yettinahole project, he said the plan is to store water in tanks without submerging villages. The issue will also be discussed in the Cabinet.

Shivakumar is scheduled to meet the Union Jal Shakti Minister in Delhi tomorrow to discuss forest land clearances for the project in Hassan and Tumakuru. "The party office is like a temple; I will visit it too," he added. *—PTI*

STRUGGLE FOR GREEN COVER

Farmer leaders, including Jagjit Singh Dallewal, protest "forceful" acquisition of over 1,700 acres of land for industrial development in Channarayapatna Hobli, Devanahalli taluk, during the State-Level Farmers' Convention organised by Samyukta Kisan Morcha at Gandhi Bhavan in Bengaluru on Monday PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD

Minors harassed, filmed with communal slur

MANGALURU, 7 JULY

Two men have been arrested for allegedly harassing two minors and circulating a video with communal remarks on social media in Puttur town of Dakshina Kannada district, police said on Monday.

The arrests were made after a complaint was lodged by the father of one of the minors, they said.

Police said that on 5 July, the complainant's son and a girl known to him were confronted by the suspects while sitting near Beermale Hill in Puttur Kasaba village. The duo allegedly verbally abused the minors, threatened to record and post their video online.

The accused then filmed the encounter in the presence of bystanders, and later circulated the video via WhatsApp and Instagram with communal remarks, they added.

Following an investigation, Purushottam, 43, and Ramachandra, 38, were arrested.

The case was registered under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, including promoting enmity between communities and criminal intimidation. *—PTI*

Shubhanshu hails ISRO's efforts

BENGALURU, 7 JULY

Shubhanshu Shukla scripted history on being the first Indian astronaut on board the International Space Station PHOTO: X/MYGOVINDIA

Shubhanshu Shukla, the Indian Gaganyatri currently aboard the International Space Station (ISS) as part of the Axiom-4 mission, has acknowledged the efforts of team ISRO in ensuring his safe travel to the ISS.

Shukla had called ISRO chairman V Narayanan on 6 July, the space agency said.

During the call, Narayanan expressed his keen interest in Shukla's well-being and inquired about the various scientific experiments and activities being conducted on the ISS. Narayanan, also Secretary of Department of Space, emphasised the significance of documenting all experiments and activities meticulously after Shukla's return to Earth, as this will provide valuable insights and inputs for the development of India's human spaceflight programme, Gaganyaan. *—PTI*

GTD's son vows loyalty to JD(S) amid rumours of rift

MYSURU, 7 JULY

Hunsur MLA GD Harish Gowda on Monday said he was with the JD(S) and would continue to be loyal to it, as the people of the party elected him as their MLA. He said he stayed away from a few party events because his father, former minister and Chamundeshwari MLA GT Devegowda, was upset with a few senior JD(S) leaders.

Harish said the High Command will soon sort out issues. "Family and party issues are totally different. I cannot interfere in the issue of my father maintaining distance from party activities. My intention is to make Kumaraswamy the chief minister of the state again," he said. He also said some JD(S) leaders want Nikhil Kumaraswamy to become the CM and the party's State unit chief, even though JDS supremo HD Deve Gowda and Union minister HD Kumaraswamy have not said anything in this regard. Nikhil is touring the state, holding district-wise meetings with party leaders *—Salar News*

SMART CLASSROOM INAUGURATED AT AL-AMEEN SCHOOLS

BENGALURU, 7 JULY

Smart classrooms were inaugurated at Al-Ameen Urdu Higher Primary School and Al-Ameen Bibi Fatima English High School in DJ Halli. The event also saw the distribution of ration kits, uniforms, and notebooks to students.

The programme drew enthusiastic participation from students, parents, and community members. It was presided over by Mohammad Obaidullah Sharif, President of Anjuman Taraqqi Urdu (Hind), Karnataka.

Chief guest Mansoor Ali Khan, AICC Secretary, lauded the schools' contribution to education and social welfare. Guest of honour Omar Ismail Khan, Chairman of Al-Ameen Educational Society, highlighted the institution's commitment to holistic development through initiatives like smart classrooms.

Several dignitaries and staff members were also present. *—Salar News*

AICC Secretary Mansoor Ali Khan at the inauguration of smart classes at Al-Ameen Urdu Higher Primary School and Al-Ameen Bibi Fatima English High School in DJ Halli PHOTO: SALAR NEWS

CHIT-FUND SCAM

Kerala couple cheats 265 investors of ₹40cr

BENGALURU, 7 JULY

- The chit-fund business initially dealt in smaller investments, capped at around Rs 5 lakh. Over time, it began offering unusually high returns on fixed deposits, attracting larger investments. Some clients reportedly invested up to Rs 1.5 crore. It was PT Savio, one of the clients, who filed the first complaint

A couple hailing from Kerala who had been staying in Ramamurthy Nagar in the City has been accused of orchestrating a huge chit fund scam, Onmanorama reported quoting police sources. The duo is reportedly accused of siphoning off Rs 40 crore from clients.

Police have registered a case and launched an investigation after more than 260 complaints were filed against A&A Chit Funds, the firm run by the couple.

It was PT Savio, who first claimed that he lost Rs 70 lakh in the chit fund scheme, and filed the first complaint. Following his report, 265 other investors came forward with similar grievances.

According to police estimates, the total amount allegedly swindled by the couple may cross Rs 40 crore. The investigators expect more victims to come forward in the coming days.

According to the Onmanorama report quoting police sources, the accused – Tommy A Varghese and wife Shiny Tommy – have been living in Ramamurthy Nagar for more than 25 years. Their chit-fund business initially dealt in smaller investments, capped at around Rs 5 lakh. Over time, it began offering unusually high returns on fixed deposits, attracting larger investments. Some clients reportedly invested up to Rs 1.5 crore.

Sources said that Tommy left the city on the pretext that he had to travel to Alappuzha in Kerala in connection with a medical emergency in his family. Since then, there had been no trace of him.

It was Tommy's sudden disappearance that made his clients suspicious, prompting them to approach the police. *—Agencies*

Tommy A Varghese and wife Shiny Tommy PHOTO: X

Ex-lover, boyfriend kill Kalaburagi man; 3 held

KALABURAGI, 7 JULY

A man who was reportedly missing in Kalaburagi was found murdered. Police said he was allegedly killed by his former partner Ashwini alias Tanu and her associates on 12 March.

The deceased is Raghavendra Nayak, 39, a resident of Ganesh Nagar in Kalaburagi. Station Bazaar Police solved the case after nearly three months by arresting three people.

City Police Commissioner Dr Sharanappa SD said on Monday that the arrested are Gururaj Sheshappa Nelogi, 36; Ashwini Rajshekhar Mallabad, 26; and Lakshmikant Malipatil, 28. Efforts are on to trace more suspects.

Raghavendra, who worked in hotels and took up odd jobs, often left home for several days. When he failed to return on 12 March, his wife, Surekha Nayak, 36, initially assumed he would come back. She filed a missing person complaint only on 25 May.

Raghavendra and Tanu were reportedly in a live-in relationship. However, Ashwini was allegedly having an affair with Gururaj, police said. When Raghavendra came to know, he asked Ashwini to leave Gururaj. Ashwini informed Gururaj about this.

Gururaj and his associates allegedly abducted Raghavendra on 12 March from a lodge and took him to a cremation ground in Krishna Nagar, where he was beaten to death. Ashwini allegedly struck him on the head. His body was later dumped in the Krishna River near Shakti Nagar, Raichur. *—Salar News*

PHOTO: X

Don't use kids: Akhilesh after girl lauds Yogi in video

LUCKNOW, 7 JULY

Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav on Monday advised administrative officials in Gorakhpur not to involve children in politics after a video of a schoolgirl, who resumed her education following the Uttar Pradesh government's intervention, surfaced online. The former Uttar Pradesh chief minister said that children should not be used for politics as it was a dangerous game. Schoolgirl, Pankhuri Tripathi met Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and pleaded for a fee exemption after she was refused admission in a school. Adityanath ensure her admission. Yadav later made a post on X in support of the girl. She also refused help from SP representatives. *—PTI*

BJP MP claims UK's involvement in Op BlueStar

GUWAHATI, 7 JULY

BJP MP Nishikant Dubey on Monday accused the Congress of giving rise to Bhindranwale and for taking help from the British Army during Operation Blue Star in 1984. He alleged that Congress had committed multiple injustices against the Sikh community like attack on the Golden Temple, giving away the Kartarpur Sahib to Pakistan in 1947 and killing Sikhs during riots that took place after Indira Gandhi's assassination. He claimed that an investigation revealed that the Indian Army conducted the operation under the British Army's leadership. Dubey also criticised the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena for targeting Hindi-speaking people. *—ANI*

PHOTO: PTI

Cong failed people of Himachal: Kangana Ranaut

SHIMLA, 7 JULY

After the Congress accused Mandi MP Kangana Ranaut of ignoring her constituency, she said that the party have failed the people of Himachal Pradesh. Ranaut accompanied by BJP state president Rajiv Bindal and local MLA Vinod Kumar visited the two affected families Pangloor village of Sainj panchayat in Mandi distric. She said people across the state were unhappy with the Congress government and felt "miserable." Relief and restoration work was the responsibility of the state government. She said she did not have a cabinet or agencies to help the flood affected. State Public Works Minister *—PTI*

Cong slams report on 'most equal' countries claim

NEW DELHI, 7 JULY

The Congress on Monday termed as "fraudulent" and "intellectually dishonest" the government's assertion that India is among the world's most equal countries, and said the Modi government cannot deny the stark reality of deepening inequalities by "doctoring data". A government release said inequality in India decreased significantly between 2011-12 and 2022-23, making it the fourth-most equal country globally. Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said the Modi government used two different benchmarks: consumption inequality in India and income inequality in other countries to arrive at the conclusion. The Congress earlier expressed concerns over the World Bank report stating poverty and inequality remain high in India. *—PTI*

PM urges BRICS to lead Global South by example

He says the group's diversity is its greatest strength

Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a group photograph with BRICS members, partners and outreach invitees at the BRICS Summit 2025, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil *PHOTO: PTI*

RIO DE JANEIRO, 7 JULY

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday called for BRICS to act as a catalyst for global cooperation and a multipolar world, urging the grouping to lead by example and meet the expectations of the Global South.

Speaking at the 17th BRICS summit, Modi said the strength of the bloc lies in its diversity and shared commitment to multipolarity.

"The diversity of the BRICS group and our firm belief in multipolarity are our greatest strengths. We must reflect on how BRICS can serve as a guiding force for a multipolar world in times to come," the prime minister said.

Underscoring the need to meet the expectations of the Global South, Prime Minister Modi said BRICS should follow the principle of 'Lead by Example'.

He also expressed India's committment to work with all partners to achieve mutual goals.

Modi highlighted the BRICS Agricultural Research Platform established in India as a model to exchange best practices in agri-biotech, precision farming and climate adaptation.

The Prime Minister also pitched for collective action on Artificial Intelligence governance, rooted in human values. He invited BRICS partners to the AI Impact Summit to be hosted by India in 2026. *—PTI*

EAM meets Russia, Iran counterparts

RIO DE JANEIRO, 7 JULY

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met with his counterparts from Russia, Iran and Mexico and discussed bilateral cooperation and global issues on Sunday, on the sidelines of the 17th BRICS Summit in Brazil. Jaishankar, during his meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, discussed bilateral cooperation, West Asia, BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). "Good to meet with FM Sergey Lavrov of Russia on the sidelines of #BRICS2025," Jaishankar posted on X. He also met his Iranian counterpart Seyed Abbas Araghchi, and discussed regional developments. During his meeting with the Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, Juan Ramon de la Fuente, Jaishankar discussed the advancement of bilateral partnership, focusing on health, digital, technology and space. BRICS brings together 11 major emerging economies, representing around 49.5 per cent of the global population. *—PTI*

Peace time is illusion, must be prepared: Rajnath

NEW DELHI, 7 JULY

Peace time is an "illusion", and India must remain prepared for uncertainty even during calm periods, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Monday, citing lessons from Operation Sindoor. Addressing the Controllers' Conference of the Defence Accounts Department (DAD), Singh praised the performance of indigenously built platforms and said global demand for Indian defence equipment has grown significantly.

He stressed the need to view defence spending not merely as expenditure but as investment, noting India's defence budget now surpasses the GDP of several countries. With global military spending reaching USD 2.7 trillion in 2024, Singh said this opens up major opportunities for Indian industry.

Urging the DAD to become "facilitators" instead of mere controllers, Singh called for agile financial systems and internal reform through self-assessment. *—PTI*

Akhilesh vows support to RJD

LUCKNOW, 7 JULY

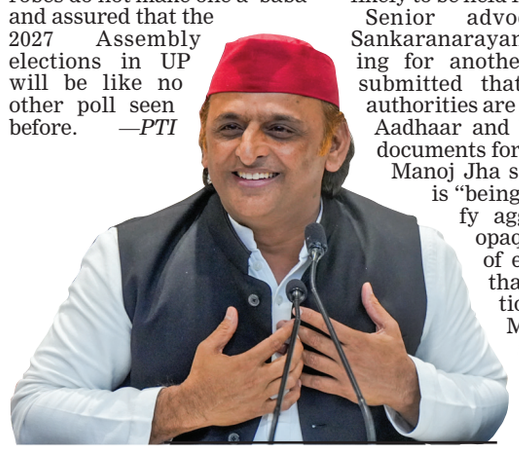
Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav on Monday said his party will extend full support to Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) in the upcoming Bihar Assembly polls and asserted that the BJP's "scams" in Uttar Pradesh will be exposed during the campaign.

The former Uttar Pradesh CM also claimed that the saffron party has no intention to make Nitish Kumar the CM again and that he will be forced to retire.

"They are using Nitish Kumar ji's name and face, but they won't make him Chief Minister again. We once wanted to project him as the prime minister, but now look — he will be retired from even the CM post. The BJP will force him to retire," Yadav said.

The SP leader accused the saffron party of being hypocritical in its religious ideology and said, "Those who commit injustice, discriminate, and use children for politics cannot call themselves Sanatani".

Attacking UP CM Yogi Adityanath, he said saffron robes do not make one a 'baba' and assured that the 2027 Assembly elections in UP will be like no other poll seen before. *—PTI*



VOTER ROLL REVISION: SC TO HEAR ON 10 JULY

NEW DELHI, 7 JULY

The Supreme Court on Monday agreed to hear on 10 July, a batch of petitions challenging the decision of the Election Commission of India to undertake Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in poll-bound Bihar.

Senior Advocate Kapil Sibal, who appeared for RJD MP Manoj Jha, urged the bench to issue notices to the poll panel on the petitions, saying it is an impossible task to be done within the timeline (polls are likely to be held in November).

Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, appearing for another petitioner, submitted that poll panel authorities are not accepting Aadhaar and Voter IDs as documents for the exercise.

Manoj Jha said the order is "being used to justify aggressive and opaque revisions of electoral rolls that disproportionately target Muslim, Dalit and poor migrant communities." *—PTI*

Bags packed, will move out: Ex-CJI

NEW DELHI, 7 JULY

Former Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud has announced that he and his family are preparing to leave their official residence in New Delhi. In response to criticism regarding his extended stay beyond the permitted time, Chandrachud confirmed that their luggage is packed and they will soon move to a paid government accommodation.

The former CJI, his wife Kalpana and their daughters Priyanka and Mahi – both of whom are physically challenged - have been residing at 5 Krishna Menon Marg. The former CJI expressed concern about the challenges faced by his daughters, who require a wheelchair-accessible home due to their condition, Nemaline myopathy.

The Supreme Court administration had contacted the government regarding Chandrachud's overstay, prompting him to clarify the situation. He pointed out that extensions for former chief justices have occurred previously, and that he had spoken with his successor, Justice Sanjiv Khanna, who allowed him to remain at the bungalow temporarily.

Despite reservations, Chandrachud is committed to moving out as soon as suitable accommodation is ready, adhering to regulations that permit a six-month retention period for retired chief justices. *—PTI*

MASSIVE RALLY

EPS kicks off AIADMK poll campaign for 2026

COIMBATORE, 7 JULY

AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami launched his statewide campaign for the 2026 Assembly election from Tamil Nadu's Mettupalayam on Monday.

The former chief minister justified the alliance with the BJP, whose leaders too joined his roadshow in the evening, and said the combine would register a resounding win in next year's poll.

Addressing a mammoth crowd, Palaniswami took a dig at Chief Minister MK Stalin.

"The DMK found the BJP good when it aligned in the past. Now it finds the BJP communal only because the AIADMK formed an alliance with it," he said, criticising the DMK. Flanked by BJP state chief Nainar Nagenthran and Union Minister L Murugan, Palaniswami said the combine would end the DMK's rule in the state. *—PTI*

AIADMK General Secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami addresses a mammoth crowd at Mettupalayam near Coimbatore, during the launch of his state-wide campaign on Monday *PHOTO: X @AIADMKOFFICIAL*

Kerala govt invited 'Pak spy' Jyoti Malhotra to visit: RTI

T.PURAM/HISAR, 7 JULY 2025

Jyoti Malhotra, recently arrested on charges of espionage for Pakistan, had earlier visited Kerala on an official invitation from the state government, according to an RTI (Right to Information) reply that has now surfaced.

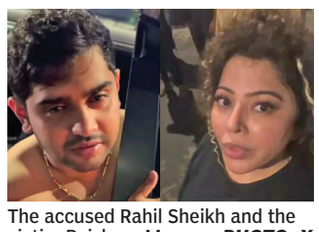
The 33-year-old vlogger from Haryana was part of a tourism promotion campaign organised by the Kerala Tourism Department, which funded a group of social media influencers to enhance the state's digital visibility as a travel destination.

The RTI response confirms that Malhotra's travel, stay, and itinerary expenses were fully covered by the department during her visit.

CPI condemned BJP's alleged attempt to drag the Kerala government into the case to "cover up" the party's "grave failures on national security."

MALHOTRA'S CUSTODY EXTENDED

Meanwhile, a Haryana court extended by 14 days her judicial custody She was initially arrested on 16 May and investigations has revealed that Malhotra had travelled to Pakistan multiple times and had established contacts with officials from Pakistani intelligence agencies. She is one of the 12 individuals arrested across Punjab, Haryana, and Uttar Pradesh as part of a coordinated crackdown on a suspected spy ring. *—PTI*



The accused Rahil Sheikh and the victim Rajshree More *PHOTO: X*

MNS LEADER'S SON HELD FOR ABUSING WOMAN

MUMBAI, 7 JULY

A man, identified as the son of Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) leader Javed Shaikh, was arrested by the Mumbai Police on Monday after a video surfaced showing him allegedly abusing a woman following a minor road accident in Andheri West.

Rahil Shaikh verbally abused the woman and on ramming his car into hers. The incident took place on Vira Desai Road in Andheri West, Mumbai.

The victim, Rajshree More, who is a nail artist, said the man was so drunk he couldn't remember he was half-naked, but could still recall how influential his father is. An FIR has been filed at Amboli Police Station. "The driver of the SUV was ramming my car repeatedly. The first time, I thought it was a mistake, but I was targeted again. I entered a small lane near my house which is wide enough for only one car and then it was easier for the other car to target mine. I asked my driver if our car was locked and then spotted two constables and asked them for help," she said *—Agencies*

CASH FOUND AT JUDGE'S HOME

Its 'Ides of March' for judiciary: Dhankhar's latest warning

KOCHI, 7 JULY

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Monday said he hopes a criminal investigation will be launched into the large stash of cash found at a judge's official residence in New Delhi, comparing the incident to the "Ides of March" - a reference to Shakespeare's Julius Caesar and a symbol of looming misfortune.

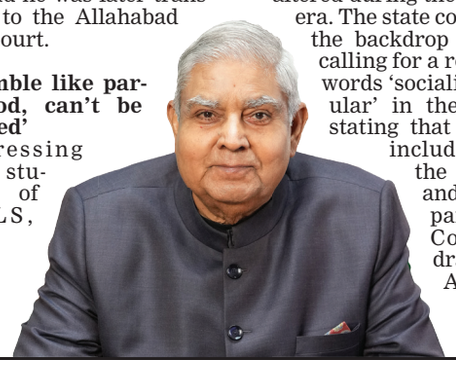
Dhankar said that as soon as the money was found, it should have been dealt with as a criminal act, and the guilty ones should be brought to justice, he said addressing students and faculty of the National University of Advanced Legal Studies (NUALS) in Kerala.

He was referring to reports that Justice Yashwant Varma was facing an impeachment in Parliament after an unspecified amount of money was found in his official residence following a fire. The Justice denied all allegations and submitted responses to both the Delhi HC Chief Justice and a Supreme Court-appointed panel. Despite this, judicial work was withdrawn from him and he was later transferred to the Allahabad High Court.

'Preamble like parenthood, can't be changed'

Addressing the students of NUALS, Dhankhar said that the Preamble of the Indian Constitution is like parenthood to children, and it cannot be changed, no matter how hard one may try.

He pointed out that no country's preamble has ever been changed, lamenting that the Preamble in India's case, was altered during the Emergency era. The state comes against the backdrop of the RSS calling for a review of the words 'socialist' and 'secular' in the Preamble, stating that these were included during the Emergency and were never part of the Constitution drafted by BR Ambedkar. *—PTI*



HC junks Turkish firm's security clearance plea

BENGALURU, 7 JULY

The Delhi High Court on Monday rejected the plea by Turkish firm Celebi against the revocation of its security clearance.

The Bureau of Civil Aviation Safety (BCAS) revoked the firm's security clearance in May, days after Turkey supported Pakistan during Operation Sindoor and condemned India's strikes on its terror camps.

The Centre said the decision was necessary considering certain inputs that continuing the services of the company would be risky for national security.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the central authority, pointed out an "unprecedented" threat to aviation security.

Celebi's counsel said the Centre's move was against the principles of natural justice and in violation of procedure under the Aircraft Security Rules.

PHOTO: X

BCAS should have provided the petitioners a hearing and reasons for their action. Justice Sachin Datta had reserved the verdict after hearing the submissions in the matter.

Celebi Airport Services India Pvt Ltd and Celebi Delhi Cargo Terminal Management India Pvt Ltd oversee ground handling and cargo terminal functions at various airports in the country. *—Agencies*

7 killed as mini bus overturns in Punjab

HOSHIARPUR, 7 JULY

In a tragic incident, seven passengers lost their lives and 32 others sustained injuries when a mini bus overturned near Sagran village on Monday. According to Deputy Superintendent of Police, Kulwinder Singh Virk, the vehicle was transporting approximately 40 passengers from Hajipur to Dasuya when the driver reportedly lost control. The injured individuals have been admitted to the Civil Hospital in Dasuya for medical treatment. The police are currently investigating the precise cause of the accident, which has raised concerns about road safety in the region. Virk has assured that a thorough inquiry will be conducted to establish the circumstances leading to this devastating event, as the community mourns the loss of life. *—PTI*

Kerala man wears smartglasses to temple, detained

T'PURAM, 7 JULY

A 66-year-old man from Gujarat was detained in Kerala's capital for attempting to enter the Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple while wearing smartglasses equipped with hidden cameras. On Sunday evening, Surendra Shah passed through the main entrance when temple security personnel became suspicious and pulled him aside for inspection. Upon checking, they discovered the concealed cameras within his glasses, leading to his escortment out of the temple premises. Authorities stated that devices like smartglasses are prohibited in the sacred space to maintain the temple's sanctity. While no malicious intent is suspected, a formal investigation has been initiated. Shah has been issued a notice to appear for further questioning. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Rahman concert in Hyderabad on 8 November

HYDERABAD, 7 JULY

Oscar-winning composer AR Rahman will be performing in Hyderabad for the first time in eight years as part of his much-anticipated "The Wonderment Tour." The concert, a standalone event, is set to take place at Ramoji Film City on 8 November. The tour commenced in Mumbai on 3 May, commemorating three decades of Rahman's remarkable influence in music. Tickets will go on sale starting 14 July via the District app by Zomato. Celebrated for hits like "Jai Ho" and "Chaiyya Chaiyya," Rahman aims to create an immersive experience, blending tradition with innovation. The event is presented in association with Hyderabad Talkies and EVA Live. *—PTI*

Infant dies after circumcision in Kerala clinic

KOZHIKODE, 7 JULY

A tragic incident unfolded when a two-month-old infant, Emil Adam, died after undergoing circumcision at a private clinic in Kakkoor, Kozhikode district. According to police reports, the infant was brought to the clinic by his family on Sunday for a circumcision procedure known as "sunnath." While at the clinic, the child reportedly began to experience uneasiness. Concerned for his wellbeing, the family arranged for him to be transferred to another hospital; however, upon arrival, the medical staff pronounced him dead despite attempts to treat him. In light of this heartbreaking development, authorities have registered a case following a complaint lodged by the child's maternal grandfather. Further investigations are on to determine the exact circumstances surrounding this incident. *—PTI*

Woman gangraped in empty train coach

Rapists threw victim on railway tracks at Sonipat; loses leg after being run over by train

PANIPAT, 7 JULY

A 35-year-old woman was allegedly gangraped in an empty coach of a stationary train here, police said on Monday.

According to police, they received a missing report about her on 26 June. Her husband told them that she had been missing since 24 June after a quarrel. Although this had happened before, she would return on her own.

Meanwhile, the woman told the police that she had been sitting at a nearby railway station when a person, claiming to have been sent by her husband, approached her.

"She said he took her with him and boarded an empty bogie of a stationary train where he raped her. Later, two other men joined him and raped her," Shri Niwas, SHO of Quilla police station said.

The woman, who appeared to be traumatised, also stated that later on she was taken to Haryana's Sonipat where the accused threw her on the tracks and she lost her leg when a train went over her. She was later admitted to a hospital and was undergoing treatment.

"We registered a Zero FIR for gangrape and forwarded it to the Panipat Government Railway Police (GRP) for further action," Niwas said over the phone.

Inspector Rajesh, SHO of the Government Railway Police here, said that they have received a zero FIR on Sunday evening and further investigation is underway.

Zero-FIR can be filed in any police station, irrespective of the place of incident/jurisdiction, and it can be later transferred to the appropriate police station. *—PTI*

- The woman had been sitting at a nearby railway station when a person, claiming to have been sent by her husband, approached her.

Police filed a zero FIR in relation with the gangrape of a woman by three men in Haryana's Panipat PHOTO: PTI

Kolkata rape: Law college reopens

KOLKATA, 7 JULY

The South Calcutta Law College reopened on Monday amid heavy security after remaining closed for 11 days following the alleged gangrape of a student on its campus.

Only BA LLB students of the first semester arrived on the first day to fill out their examination forms.

Police officers overseeing security at the campus checked the ID cards of the100 students going in.

No student will be allowed to stay on the campus after 2pm and campus all teaching and non-teaching staff would leave the only after the last student had left.

Students have been asked to follow their usual class timetable from 8 July

Guardians, accompanying their wards, expressed apprehensions about their safety. *—PTI*

A student arrives at South Calcutta Law College after it reopened following the alleged rape on Monday PHOTO: PTI

Lives lost, homes gone as rains wreak havoc

Debris and slit near damaged houses at a flood-affected area, in Mandi district in Himachal Pradesh on 6 July PHOTO: PTI

SHIMLA, 7 JULY

Search and rescue operations are underway with drones and sniffer dogs to trace 30 people who went missing after cloudbursts, flash floods and landslides wreaked havoc in Himachal's Mandi district last week.

78 people and 215 cattle were killed in rain related incidents, while 494 people were rescued.

A yellow warning was sounded at isolated places in Himachal till 10 July.

There was an estimated loss of Rs 572 crore, though the chief minister maintained it as Rs 700 crore.

Nagaland

Three people died, flight operations were suspended and vehicular movement was disrupted on National Highway 29 as incessant rain caused flooding and landslides across Nagaland

They were electrocuted to death in their homes in Burma Camp and Kuda Village in Dimapur.

Dimapur, Kohima and Niuland were the most affected districts.

Bhubaneswar

Two women were killed and an eight-year-old girl was injured after a wall of an under-construction poultry farm collapsed due to heavy rain in Odisha's Nuapada district on 6 July.

While an orange alerts was sounded in nine districts, a yellow alert was sounded in eight other districts.

Andhra Pradesh

Thunderstorms accompanied and strong winds were forecast at isolated places in Andhra Pradesh's North Coastal Andhra Pradesh, Yanam, South Coastal Andhra Pradesh and Rayalaseema from 7 July to 11.

People in both inland and coastal areas have been asked to exercise caution.

Jharkhand

A flash flood warning was issued for Jharkhand's 12 districts on Monday.

Latehar district recorded the highest surplus rainfall at 157 per cent. However, Deoghar and Godda were still facing deficit in rainfall despite the state receiving a surplus rainfall by 69 per cent.

Rajasthan

Rains lashed several parts of Rajasthan, with Sikrai in Dausa district recording the highest rainfall. More rains are predicted. *—PTI*

MONSOON FUN IN PRAYAGRAJ

Young men bathe in the swollen Ganga river during the monsoon season, at Dashashwamedh Ghat, in Prayagraj in Uttar Pradesh on Monday PHOTO: PTI

Slaughter ban during Jain festival may set trend: HC

MUMBAI, 7 JULY

The Bombay High Court on Monday wondered if it can prohibit slaughter of animals during the nine-day Paryushan Parv of the Jain community from 21 August, and whether such an order would open the floodgates with other communities also seeking similar bans during their festivals like Ganesh Chaturthi and Navratri.

A bench of Chief Justice Alok Aradhe and Justice Sandeep Marne was hearing a petition filed by a Jain community trust challenging the 2024 orders passed by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation as well as civic bodies of Nashik and Pune prohibiting slaughter of animals only for one day during Paryushan last year.

The court then questioned if it can pass such an order. "It shouldn't happen that tomorrow every other religion also makes similar demands. You (Jain community) will get an order for nine days for Paryushan Parv, and then some other community will come forward and seek similar orders for the Ganesh Chaturthi and Navratri festival," the court asked.

"Under which statutory obligation should slaughterhouses be ordered to remain closed for nine days," the court asked. *—PTI*

2 dead, 140 ill amid diarrhoea outbreak

BERHAMPUR, 7 JULY

A diarrhoea outbreak in Ganjam district, Odisha, has resulted in two fatalities and over 140 people falling ill, according to officials. The initial cases emerged from Ustapalli village in the Digapahandi block on Saturday.

In the past three days, two individuals have died, prompting ten patients to be transferred to the MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur due to deteriorating health conditions.

The specific cause of the outbreak remains unknown, reported a medical officer from the block. "We collected water samples from the village for testing on Sunday, with results expected by Tuesday," she added. *—PTI*

Nipah patient critical, 52 at risk in Palakkad

PALAKKAD, 7 JULY

The condition of the Nipah virus-infected patient reported in this north Kerala district remains critical, and all possible treatment is being provided, Health Minister Veena George said on Monday.

The 38-year-old woman, a native of Thachanattukara in Palakkad district, is undergoing treatment at the Government Medical College in neighbouring Kozhikode district. Another patient, a Malappuram native, had succumbed to the virus last week.

As per protocol, the woman has been given monoclonal antibody treatment, with the second dose administered on Monday morning, George said after chairing a high-level review meeting at Palakkad Medical College. "This is the first Nipah case reported in Palakkad. The patient's condition remains critical, but all available treatment is being provided," she said.

A total of 173 contacts have been identified – 100 primary and 73 secondary. Of them, 52 are considered high-risk and 48 low-risk, she said. All five samples tested in the district so far have returned negative.

A three-kilometre radius around the patient's house was declared a containment zone, with strict surveillance being carried out. Strict action against will be taken those spreading false information related to the outbreak. *—PTI*

A three-kilometre radius around the Nipah patient's house has been declared a containment zone in Kerala's Palakkad PHOTO: PTI

Bihar engineer stabbed to death by robbers

MUZAFFARPUR, 7 JULY

Bihar was rocked by two violent incidents, with a government engineer brutally stabbed to death by robbers in Muzaffarpur and a businessman shot dead in Patna.

The victim, Mohammad Mumtaz, a junior engineer, was attacked at around 3am at his residence in Madipur. The assailants struck in front of Mumtaz's wife and children, later fleeing the scene with valuables.

The weapon used in the attack was recovered. Mumtaz was rushed to hospital, where he died.

In Patna, a 50-year-old businessman, Ajeet Kumar, was shot dead in the Khagaul locality on 6 July. A case was registered and investigations are underway.

Meanwhile, one of the accused in the murder of Gopal Khemka in Bihar's Patna was arrested during the industrialists' funeral.

The police arrested another six and they are being interrogated. Three criminals had gathered near a tea stall near Khemka's residence before killing him.

Khemka was shot dead by an unidentified armed assailant on 4 July. *—PTI*

STUDY REVEALS

Leukemia likely in planned C-section babies

NEW DELHI, 7 JULY

Having a planned caesarean section during delivery could be related to an increased risk of leukaemia later in the child's life, compared with an emergency C-section, a study has found.

A C-section delivery of a child involves making a surgical cut in the mother's abdomen and uterus. The need for delivering via a C-section can be planned or arise as an emergency during labour.

Researchers at Karolinska Institute said that exposure of a baby to vaginal bacteria in an emergency C-section -- which usually begins as a vaginal delivery -- could be why planned C-sections carry an increased risk of certain diseases, compared to emergency ones.

The study, published in The International Journal of Cancer, looked at nearly 25 lakh children born in Sweden during 1982-1989 and 1999-2015 from the Medical Birth Register.

Planned C-section carry an increased risk to certain diseases compared to emergency ones PHOTO: PIXABAY

Over 3.75 lakh of them were born by a C-section, of which 1,495 later developed leukaemia, a cancer affecting blood and bone marrow.

Compared to an emergency C-section, birth via a planned C-section was associated with a 21 per cent higher risk of developing acute lymphoblastic leukaemia, the most common form of childhood leukaemia.

Emergency caesarean sections usually begin as a vaginal delivery, which causes stress for the baby and exposure to vaginal bacteria if the amniotic sac has ruptured.

A foetus grows and develops in an amniotic sac during pregnancy.

However, in planned C-sections -- usually performed before labour has started naturally -- the baby does not experience this stress and is not exposed to vaginal bacteria.

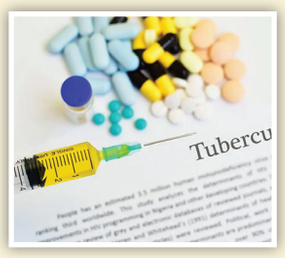
The findings help contribute towards understanding what causes acute lymphoblastic leukaemia in children. *—PTI*

TN 1ST TO IMPLEMENT TB DEATH PREDICTION MODEL

NEW DELHI, 7 JULY

Tamil Nadu has become the first state in the country to implement a model which predicts the probability of deaths among adults with Tuberculosis and has integrated it with the existing state-wide application Severe TB Web Application (TB SeWA), which triages them at diagnosis.

The predictive model, developed by ICMR's National Institute of Epidemiology (NIE) that was launched last week, aims to reduce the average time from diagnosis to hospital admission for severely ill TB patients, thereby bringing down the mortality rate further, said Tamil Nadu state TB officer, Asha Frederick.



The new feature has been added to Tamil Nadu's existing TB SeWA, which has been in use since 2022 under the state's differentiated care model initiative Tamil Nadu - Kasanoi Erappila Thittam (TN-KET), she said.

"The new feature calculates and displays predicted probability of death for adults with TB," Manoj Murhekar, the director of NIE said. *—PTI*

SALAR UPCLOSE

NAHEED ATAULLA

I will disqualify MLAs involved in horse-trading: Speaker UT Khader

UT Khader, the first Muslim Speaker of the Karnataka Legislative Assembly, takes charge as CM Siddaramaiah and DyCM look on in Bengaluru on 24 May, 2023; On 4 June, 2017, the Good Samaritan Speaker turns his car into an ambulance to help an accident victim; Khader takes the driver seat during an off-road motorsport event in Bengaluru ***PHOTOS: PTI/MOHAMMED ASAD/SALAR***

Karnataka Legislative Assembly Speaker UT Khader Fareed's humanitarian spirit sets him apart. He is known to convert his car into an "ambulance" on spotting an accident on his way. In the 2018 Assembly polls, he stood out as the only Congress MLA to win from Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts. In May 2023, at 54, he became the first Muslim and the second-youngest person to occupy the Speaker's post.

In a freewheeling chat with **Salar News**, Khader says he has attained every position despite being from a minority community and at a young age.

What is your take on the controversy stirred by the BJP that no country has changed its Constitution's preamble except India, and recently Vice President Jagdeep Dhankar said the insertion of the words "secular" and "socialist" during the Emergency was a "travesty of justice" and "sacrilege to the spirit of Sanatana"?

They have given their individual opinion, and it's left to them. Ultimately, the Constitution is supreme for us. Whichever government comes to power at the Centre must run according to the Constitution, as it's not a book written by the United States. Therefore, nobody should speak against the Constitution, as doing so indirectly means disrespecting the country.

You are among the four State Assembly Speakers nominated to the National Committee of Presiding Officers, a panel constituted to deliberate on key reforms in the functioning of State Legislatures. Has the panel met, and what have been the discussions?

I'm one of the four Speakers on the committee, with my Maharashtra counterpart as the chairman. We have spoken over the phone, and the panel is scheduled to meet in the third week of August. We will discuss the Defamation Act and how to revive and strengthen it to protect elected representatives.

One of the key concerns the panel is planning to address is political defections, which Karnataka has witnessed a lot in the past. How can this be curbed apart from the Anti-Defection Act?

In my opinion, the laws and rules guiding the Anti-Defection Act are only one part; everything depends on the person who occupies the Speaker's chair. All powers are vested in him, and he should be strict. This will ensure that no MLA dares to claim they can topple a government. As Speaker, if I come to know that there is horse-trading and MLAs are trying to defect, I will disqualify them. Let them go to court and challenge it.

As MLA of Mangaluru, you have sought "point of call" status (allowing international carriers) for Mangaluru International Airport from the Civil Aviation Ministry, though the Centre has turned down the demand, stating that new non-metro airports will not be granted the status. Does Mangaluru airport need this status?

A lot of flights come from various countries to Mangaluru International Airport, and it's a hub for the southern region. Travellers from Kerala go to Kempegowda International Airport or to Kochi for international flights. To get the "point of call" status, land has to be acquired, and a decision made on whether it should be developed on a PPP (Public-Private Partnership) model. The Centre's stand is: if the project is given to a private party, why should the government acquire the land? Their contention is that they are only going to set up the infrastructure on a lease basis.

My stand is that coastal Karnataka is a land created by God, where beach and religious tourism can be developed. It has many educational institutions. Why should international travellers land in Mangaluru and go to Kerala for these?

As Speaker, you have taken several initiatives to improve legislators' attendance during sessions. These include arranging food and reclining chairs for short naps. Despite all this, why is attendance still thin?

The attendance of members is much better than before, but it may still not be completely satisfactory. First, we must understand why members don't attend the Assembly. By the time they get ready by 10.30am. and have breakfast, people from their constituencies are waiting to meet them. I arranged breakfast at 9am. in the Assembly lounge and also provided lunch because many members used to go to restaurants during the one-hour lunch break. It would take them 30 minutes to go and return, and some would also visit the Legislators' Home for a short nap. By providing lunch at Vidhana Soudha and reclining chairs for rest, they have no more excuses.

When one's dream is to become an MLA and voters have given that opportunity, why are they not attending the Assembly?

> **There have been instances when people said they would recommend me. I told them, 'If it's Allah's wish, I will get it'. And I did. I received all these posts despite being from a minority community and at a young age**
>
> -UT Khader, Speaker

You are among the few Speakers who have not confined themselves to conducting proceedings in the House but have gone beyond, introducing badges for legislators with the Gandaberunda emblem, guided tours of Vidhana Soudha, and even setting up a dog shelter. What interests you in these activities?

During my visits abroad, I noticed elected representatives wearing their country's badge. The state emblem, Gandaberunda, has a rich history, and I decided on the badges to help legislators be recognized as elected representatives outside.

As for the guided tours, there's no better place than Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru for people to visit. It's our duty to open it to the public. The tours provide an educational experience about the statues and the history of the secretariat. We're currently running 12 to 14 tour batches on Sundays, second Saturdays, and national holidays.

My future plan is to introduce cultural activities on these days. Regarding the dog shelter, there are about 60 stray dogs within Vidhana Soudha premises. Some reactions have been positive, especially from dog lovers, while others worry about VIP safety. Every dog has a lifespan of 10–12 years, and most of these dogs are 7–8 years old. Since no outside dogs will enter, we can at least provide food and shelter to the existing ones. Some people have even decided to go to court on this issue.

Another interesting side to your profile is converting your car into an "ambulance" when you come across accidents. Can you recall one or two such incidents?

Helping people has been in my blood since school. In high school and college, I helped accident victims and, back then, had to visit the police station as a witness.

As an MLA, I once came across a couple who had met with an accident. I took them in my car—while the husband died, the wife survived.

As Health Minister, I was on my way to an Iftar party at Bangalore Palace when an accident occurred in front of me. The victims were senior citizens. I asked my driver to take them to the hospital and took an autorickshaw to the venue. The husband did not survive, but his son, who was in the US, met me days later and thanked me for enabling him to spend time with his father in the ICU.

As Health Minister, I abolished two things: hospitals demanding an advance before admission and the practice of requiring a stranger who brings an accident victim to visit the police station.

As a five-term MLA representing Ullal and now Mangaluru City, what are the reasons for the communal flare-ups in the coastal region?

As you know, Dakshina Kannada and Udupi are sensitive areas, and whatever happens is given a communal colour. It's more about fear of each other than hatred. Revenge murders are not a solution. Bengaluru witnesses more murders, but they don't take on a communal tone.

You have raised your voice against attacks on Muslims, but your stand advising students to take the legal route over the Bommai government's hijab ban was seen by many as a letdown, especially since Siddaramaiah, as Opposition leader, supported the students.

I am from Mangaluru and understand the situation well. Until the Bommai government issued the order, there was no problem with wearing hijab. An 11-year-old rule prescribing uniforms in schools and colleges, framed during the Congress regime, was revived.

After the order, the students should have attended classes. Instead, they stayed home, sat outside colleges, took selfies, abused lecturers, and began tweeting. They were instigated by some people, and from Mangaluru and Kundapur, it spread to other districts. These students had only six months to complete their course. Some minority-run women's colleges even offered them seats, going as far as hiring all-women faculty. That's why I asked them to go to court.

You are known for your non-confrontational attitude outside the legislature, building bridges by participating in Hindu festivals and rituals, even fasting during Nagamandala. But there's discontent about your approach to Muslim community concerns?

Let anyone come and tell me that I have not addressed community concerns. Allegations can be made, and they're made against everyone, including the Gandhi family. I ask through your media: has anyone approached me with a problem that I did not resolve?

Many see you as a Muslim leader representing the coastal belt. But that hasn't fully materialised?

I want clarification: what defines a "Muslim leader"? What I am, nobody has seen. If something is wrong, I cannot say it's right. If I do, I can become a leader easily. But we need to be a bridge between communities. If I join others in supporting a mistake — even if committed by my community, how will the bridge be built?

You have come a long way from being an MLA in 2007 to holding positions such as Minister, Deputy Floor Leader, and now Speaker. Which role or position has given you the most satisfaction?

When I was an MLA, I was happy to continue my social work. I was very active and had asked the highest number of questions in the Assembly. As a minister, it was day-and-night involvement in work. I'm not focused on any specific position. Whatever the post is, I am happy. Even if I don't hold any power, I will still be content.

My prayers to God are simple: to give me whatever brings happiness and peace. I have seen politics since my childhood — my father Haji UT Fareed was also an MLA. In my entire political career, I have never approached anyone with a recommendation letter. There have been instances when people said they would recommend me. I told them, "If it's Allah's wish, I will get it." And I did. I received all these posts despite being from a minority community and at a young age.

After entering public life, have you continued your passion for participating in bike and car races?

I'm not a regular anymore but go once in a while. Three months ago, I participated in an off-road motorsport event (a form of racing involving modified vehicles) in Bengaluru. Occasionally, I take the car out for a long drive around midnight in Bengaluru, just so I don't forget how to drive.

Watch full interview on

Salar Digital YouTube

LETTERS

write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

Struggling farmer in WB declared 'illegal immigrant' by Assam govt

Uttam is a farmer with small holdings who struggles to feed himself and his family ***PHOTO: PTI***

A 50-year-old farmer from West Bengal's Dinhata, who has been allegedly served a notice by the Foreigners' Tribunal in Assam declaring him an illegal migrant, has triggered political slugfest between Trinamool Congress and the BJP.

Uttam Kumar, a resident of Sadyaler Kuthi in Cooch Behar district's Dinhata subdivision, said he was stunned when he had been served with a notice at the beginning of the year for allegedly "having entered the country illegally through Assam between 1966 and 1971".

"I have never gone outside Cooch Behar in my life. I was born and raised here. How can I be an illegal migrant?" a visibly distraught Uttam told reporters.

Uttam is a farmer with small holdings who struggles to feed himself and his family.

"I was served the notice in January. I don't read things well, so I showed it to my neighbours. That is when I learnt Assam has charged me with being an illegal infiltrator," he said.

The notice accuses Uttam of not submitting the requisite documents during police verification and hence has been declared a suspected illegal immigrant, according to the report.

Foreigners Tribunals, currently exclusive to Assam, are tasked with determining whether individuals suspected of being foreigners are indeed Indian citizens.

Political reactions came promptly, with the ruling Trinamool Congress alleging that it was another proof of the "BJP's anti-Bengali" attitude.

"All residents of the Brahmaputra basin, who migrated before 1971, are Indian citizens as per the Assam Accord. Even if we assume someone entered before 1971, they are legitimate Indians," said Udayan Guha, the North Bengal development minister.

"Uttam is a Rajbanshi, a son of this soil. This notice is outrageous. The BJP can't stand Bengalis. They are trying to repeat the NRC chaos of Assam here," Guha alleged.

> Uttam Kumar, a resident of Sadyaler Kuthi in Cooch Behar district's Dinhata subdivision, said he was stunned when he had been served with a notice at the beginning of the year for allegedly "having entered the country illegally through Assam between 1966 and 1971".

The Trinamool Congress also issued a strong statement on social media platform X, lashing out at the BJP.

"A resident of Dinhata, Cooch Behar is being hunted like a criminal by Assam's Foreigners Tribunal. Despite submitting every valid identity proof, he's being hounded and asked to cough up electoral rolls from every election between 1966 and 2008. Smt. @MamataOfficial has made it crystal clear that witch hunts under the guise of NRC have no place in Bengal. We will not allow @BJP4India to turn our land into another detention camp," the TMC said.

"They did it in Assam. They want to do it here. And if they ever come to power, no one will be spared. As long as Didi is at the helm, the Bangla-Birodhi (anti-Bengal) BJP will not be allowed to touch a single hair on our people's heads. Let that be a warning," it said on the social media platform.

The BJP, however, rejected the accusations and instead blamed the Mamata Banerjee-led state government for the confusion over identity documentation. "There may be one or two stray cases. But we hold the Mamata Banerjee government accountable for the situation. The lines between real citizens and those using forged documents have become increasingly blurred," a Bengal BJP leader said.

Thousands of infiltrators from Bangladesh have managed to create fake papers identifying them as Bengal residents and are now moving across the country as Indian nationals, he claimed.

Sushil Chandra Barman, BJP MLA from Mathabhanga, also questioned the state administration's role.

"Uttam is a registered voter. If Assam has served him a notice, where is the state government? Do they not have a responsibility to protect their people? This could be a deliberate conspiracy to brand the BJP as anti-Bengali," he added. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

Pet lion owner held in Pak as it attacks 3 people

LAHORE, 7 JULY

The owners of a pet lion that escaped from a farmhouse and injured a woman and her two children have been arrested in the eastern Pakistani city of Lahore, authorities said Sunday. The arrest comes after a dramatic video, showing the lion leap over a wall before attacking the victims, surfaced. The trio attacked by the lion sustained injuries to their faces and arms on Wednesday when the lion escaped from its cage, police said. According to a police report, the children's father claimed that the lion's owners stood by and watched as the animal clawed at his family, making no effort to restrain it. The lion was later relocated to a wildlife park. *—PTI*

Aus woman used mushroom to kill three; convicted

MELBOURNE, 7 JULY

Australian woman Erin Patterson was found guilty on Monday of murdering three of her estranged husband's relatives by deliberately serving them poisonous mushrooms for lunch. Patterson faces life in prison and the sentencing will be announced later. Patterson, who sat in the dock between two prison officers, showed no emotion but blinked rapidly as the verdicts were read. After days of deliberation, the jury concluded that she poisoned her guests on purpose. While the Prosecutors didn't offer a motive for the killings, they highlighted during the trial the strained relations between Patterson and her estranged husband, and the frustration that she had felt about his parents in the past. *—PTI*

12 Turkish soldiers die in Iraqi cave, inhaling methane

ANKARA, 7 JULY

Seven more Turkish soldiers have died from methane gas poisoning following a cave search operation in northern Iraq, Turkey's Defence Ministry said Monday, bringing the death toll to 12. The soldiers had been searching for the remains of a fellow soldier previously killed by Kurdish militants. The troops were searching a mountain cave when 19 of them were exposed to the gas, according to the ministry. Five of the soldiers died Sunday from the colourless, odourless, flammable gas that can cause asphyxiation in sufficient concentration, and seven more succumbed on Monday. The ministry said the incident took place in the "Claw-Lock Operation region" — a reference to an operation launched against the Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, in northern Iraq in April 2022.*—PTI*

Inmates celebrate as 'Diddy' Combs returns to jail

NEW YORK, 7 JULY

Sean "Diddy" Combs got a standing ovation from fellow inmates when the music mogul returned to jail after winning acquittals on potential life-in-prison charges, providing what his lawyer says might have been the best thing he could do for Black incarcerated men in America. Combs, 55, remains jailed at a federal lockup in Brooklyn after his conviction Wednesday on prostitution-related charges, which could put him in prison for several more years. After federal agents raided his homes in Los Angeles and Miami in March 2024, Agnifilo said he told Combs to expect to be arrested on sex trafficking charges. The verdict in Manhattan federal court came after a veteran team of eight defense lawyers led by Agnifilo executed a trial strategy that resonated with jurors. *—PTI*

BRICS not for confrontation: China tells US

Brazil, the host of the summit, flays NATO's plan to increase military spending to 5% of GDP

BEIJING/RIO DE JANEIRO, 7 JULY

China on Monday said BRICS is not a bloc for confrontation and does not target any third country, responding to US President Donald Trump's threat to impose a 10 per cent tariff on countries aligning with what he labelled as "anti-American" BRICS policies.

"BRICS advocates openness, inclusiveness and win-win cooperation," said Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning. "It is not a bloc for confrontation nor does it target any country." She added, "Trade and tariffs have no winners and protectionism leaves nowhere."

Trump, now back in the White House, made the tariff threat on Truth Social, warning: "Any country aligning themselves with the anti-American policies of BRICS will be charged an additional 10 per cent tariff. No exceptions."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi attends a session during the 17th annual BRICS Summit in Brazil on Monday *PHOTO: PTI*

The comments came during the 17th BRICS Summit in Rio de Janeiro, where leaders condemned increasing tariffs – without directly naming Trump. BRICS, initially comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, expanded in 2024 to include Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the UAE. Indonesia joined in 2025.

Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva opened the summit by criticising NATO's military spending plans. "It is always easier to invest in war than in peace," he said. The group's declaration also addressed attacks on Iran, avoiding direct mention of the US or Israel.

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi represented Tehran in place of President Pezeshkian and condemned Israel and the US for rights violations. Though BRICS called for a two-state solution in Gaza, Iran rejected it, calling it unworkable.

Russia's Foreign Ministry openly condemned "unprovoked military strikes" on Iran. The BRICS declaration mentioned Ukraine only once – criticising Ukrainian attacks on Russia.

Despite the show of unity, doubts persist. Egypt's President withdrew, and representation from other new members remained uncertain. Analyst Joao Alfredo Nyegray said BRICS risks becoming fragmented rather than a cohesive leadership pole.

- Back in White House, Trump made the tariff threat on Truth Social, warning that any country aligning themselves with the anti-American policies of BRICS will be charged an additional 10 per cent tariff

Brazil, wary of US retaliation, avoided controversial topics and focused on trade and health. Researcher Bruce Scheidl noted that in the face of Trump's tariff wars, the summit remains "the best opportunity for emerging countries to seek alternatives and diversify partnerships."

Outside the summit, protests highlighted Iran's human rights record and Brazil's Amazon oil plans, while Lula used the summit to boost environmental cooperation ahead of COP 30 in Belem. *—PTI*

Israel has rained hellfire on Houthi terrorists in Yemen *PHOTO: X*

Israeli forces bombard Yemen's Houthi rebels

DUBAI, 7 JULY

Israel's military launched airstrikes early Monday targeting ports and facilities held by Yemen's Houthi rebels, with the rebels responding with missile fire targeting Israel.

The Israeli attacks came after a Houthi attack on Sunday, targeting a Liberian-flagged ship in the Red Sea that caught fire and took on water, later forcing its crew to abandon the vessel.

Suspicion for the attack on the Greek-owned bulk carrier Magic Seas immediately fell on the Houthis, particularly as a security firm said bomb-carrying drone boats appeared to hit the ship after it was targeted by small arms and rocket-propelled grenades. The rebels' media reported on the attack but did not claim it. It can take them hours or even days before they acknowledge an assault.

A renewed Houthi campaign against shipping could again draw in US and Western forces to the area, particularly after President Donald Trump targeted the rebels in a major airstrike campaign.

SHIP ATTACKED

Crew members aboard a Liberian-flagged ship set ablaze by a series of attacks in the Red Sea abandoned the vessel on Sunday night as it took on water, marking the first serious assault in the vital corridor for trade after a months-long campaign by Yemen's Houthi rebels there.

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Trump hopeful of hostage deal this week

WASHINGTON, 7 JULY

A day ahead of his meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu US President Donald Trump on Sunday said he was hopeful of reaching a hostage deal with Hamas this week.

"I think there's a good chance we have a deal with Hamas...," Trump said on his way back to Washington after a holiday weekend. "We've gotten a lot of the hostages out, but pertaining to the remaining hostages, quite a few of them will be coming out," Trump said. "I think the conversation with President Trump can certainly help advance the outcome we are all hoping for," Netanyahu said. —PTI

Coup fear in Pak as Munir eyes Prez chair

ISLAMABAD, 7 JULY

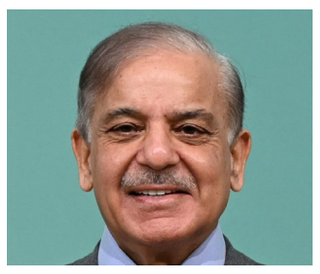
It has been only two days since the 47th anniversary of General Zia-ul-Haq's infamous military coup of 5 July, 1977, but rumours are rife about an impending coup that could lead to the removal of President Asif Ali Zardari and Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir taking that position.

Pakistani media reports said General Munir, who was recently elevated to the rank of Field Marshal, could be eyeing the presidency, marking the transition of power.

Pakistani journalist Syed's claims that General Munir was doing the ground work to take over the position from Asif Ali.

The media reports were unclear about whether this transition of power will be through a voluntary political arrangement or a forced military takeover.

They, however, hinted that preparations to remove Asif Ali from the post were underway.



Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari and General Asim Munir *PHOTO: X*

The rumours come amid mounting tensions in Pakistan's political and security circles after Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, in an interview, criticised General Munir and also said Pakistan should not hand over terrorists Hafiz Saeed and Masood Azhar to India.

Bilawal's remarks instigated anti-coup reactions in different segments of society, hinting at a strong opposition to any abrupt military intervention, and provoked a public clarification from Talha Saeed, the son of terrorist organisation Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) chief Hafiz Saeed.

Taha said Bilawal's statements were against Pakistan's national policy, national interest and sovereignty. He said the former foreign minister's remarks have brought disgrace to Pakistan.

Even though it is not confirmed, questions are also being raised about the role of the Sharif family behind the development.

Rumours of a possible coup, shifting political allegiances and backdoor power deals have further shadowed an already strained democracy in the neighbouring country, observed political analysts. *—Agencies*

Saeed's son fumes over Bilawal remarks

ISLAMABAD, 7 JULY

Talha Saeed, son of Lashkar-e-Taiba chief Hafiz Saeed, condemned Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's remarks supporting possible extradition of Hafiz Saeed and Jaish-e-Mohammed's Masood Azhar to India.

"His statement is against national interest and sovereignty," Talha said, accusing Bilawal of promoting an enemy narrative.

In an Al Jazeera interview, Bilawal said Pakistan "would not be opposed" to extradition as a confidence-building step with India. He noted Hafiz Saeed is jailed in Lahore, while Azhar is believed to be in Afghanistan. *—Agencies*

Russia's transport minister found dead hours after Putin sacks him

KYIV, 7 JULY

Russia launched over 100 drones at civilian areas across Ukraine overnight, Ukrainian authorities said Monday, as Russian President Vladimir Putin dismissed Transport Minister Roman Starovoyt, who died by suicide, following mass travel disruptions caused by Ukrainian drone threats.

At least 10 civilians were killed and 38 injured, including three children, in the past 24 hours. One died in Odesa, 27 were injured in Kharkiv.

The attacks are part of an escalation, with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy stating that Russia has launched 1,270 drones, 39 missiles, and nearly 1,000 glide bombs in the past week. Ukraine has responded by signing deals with European allies and a major US defence firm to scale up drone production.

Hours after his dismissal, Starovoit's body was found in a car in Odintsovo, a suburb of Moscow, with a gunshot wound, as stated by Russia's Investigative Committee. Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov denied that the dismissal was due to a "lack of trust," offering no further explanation. Starovoyt's dismissal follows a weekend of chaos at Moscow's Sheremetyevo and St Petersburg's Pulkovo airports, where 485 flights were cancelled, amid claims of "external interference". Deputy Andrey Nikitin has been named acting transport minister. Meanwhile, Russia claimed to have downed 91 Ukrainian drones overnight across 13 regions, the Black Sea, and Crimea. *—PTI*

Inset: Roman Starovoyt; Rescue workers put out a fire of a building destroyed by a Russian drone strike in Ukraine on Monday *PHOTO: PTI*

Musk's new party plan ridiculous, says Trump

NEW YORK/BOSTON, 7 JULY

US President Donald Trump slammed Elon Musk after he formed a new political party, terming the move as "ridiculous" and saying the tech billionaire has gone "completely off the rails".

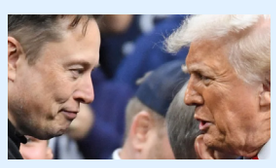
Trump also charged that Musk had become a "train wreck" over the past five weeks and accused him of seeking improper influence by asking him to nominate his friend, Jared Isaacman, to be NASA administrator.

Musk, who spearheaded the Trump administration's push to cut government waste, had criticised Trump's "big beautiful" tax and spending bill because of estimates that it would add trillions of dollars to the federal deficit.

Meanwhile, a federal bench trial began Monday over a lawsuit that challenges a Trump administration campaign of arresting and deporting faculty and students who participated in pro-Palestinian demonstrations and other political activities. The lawsuit, filed by several university associations against the President and members of his administration, would be one of the first to go to trial.

Several scholars are expected to testify how the policy and subsequent arrests have prompted them to abandon their activism for Palestinian human rights and criticising the Israeli government's policies.

Since Trump took office, the U.S. government has used its immigration enforcement powers to crack down on international students and scholars at several American universities. *—PTI*



GLOBAL CLIMATE CHAOS

Floods, fires and storms leave trail of devastation

TEXAS FLOODS KILL 82

At least 82 people, including 28 children, died in devastating Texas floods over the holiday weekend, with 41 still missing. Torrential rains ravaged Kerr County, overwhelming summer camps like Camp Mystic. Survivors described clinging to trees and fleeing to attics. Rescue efforts face dangerous conditions, with fears of more flooding. President Trump declared a disaster and may visit Friday. Pope Leo XIV offered prayers from Rome. Questions mount over warnings and emergency preparedness as grief and search efforts continue.

72 DEAD IN PAK, MORE FLOODING FEARED

At least 72 people have died and over 130 were injured as ten days of monsoon rains and flash floods swept across Pakistan, affecting Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, Sindh, and Balochistan. Authorities remain on high alert, warning of more rain and flash floods. Tourists are urged to avoid affected areas. Outrage followed after 17 family members were swept away in Swat River, with videos of their pleas for help circulating online.

TYPHOON DANAS BATTERS TAIWAN, 5M SANS POWER

Typhoon Danas struck Taiwan's west coast late Sunday with winds of 144 kph and torrential rain, killing two and injuring at least 334. Over 580,000 households lost power, with schools and offices closed. Landslides and flooding forced 3,400 evacuations, mostly near Kaohsiung. The storm stranded thousands on outlying islands and disrupted travel. Downgraded to a tropical storm, Danas is now heading for China.

WILDFIRES RAGE IN SYRIA

UN teams have been deployed to Syria's Latakia province, where wildfires have forced hundreds to flee and destroyed 10,000 hectares of forest and farmland. Firefighters from Syria, Turkey and Jordan are battling the flames near the al-Frunloq natural reserve. Syria's emergency minister called the situation "extremely tragic." Concerns grow over unexploded ordnance in affected areas. Below-average rainfall and climate change are blamed for worsening conditions, amid widespread water shortages across the region.

PHOTO: PTI

Gold falls by ₹550 to ₹98,570/10g

NEW DELHI, 7 JULY

Gold prices fell by Rs 550 to Rs 98,570 per 10g in the national capital on Monday following muted global trends and continued tariff threats from US President Donald Trump. According to the All India Sarafa Association, gold of 99.9 per cent purity had settled at Rs 99,120 per 10g on Saturday, up by Rs 100 from the previous close. Gold of 99.5 per cent purity declined by Rs 500 to Rs 98,100 per 10g (inclusive of all taxes). It had settled at Rs 98,600 per 10g in the previous market session. Silver prices remained unchanged for the second straight session at Rs 1,04,800 per kg. Spot gold in the international markets depreciated by USD 38.95 or 1.17 per cent to USD 3,297.69 per ounce. *—PTI*

Rupee falls by 47P, closes at 85.87 against USD

MUMBAI, 7 JULY

The rupee fell sharply by 47 paise to close at 85.87 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday amid rising global crude oil prices and a strong American currency. Outflow of foreign funds fuelled by uncertainties over US President Donald Trump's trade tariffs put further pressure on the local unit, according to forex traders. At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 85.53 against the US dollar and traded in the range of 85.51-86.03 before settling at 85.87 (provisional), lower by 47 paise from its previous close. The rupee had settled at 85.40 against the US dollar on Friday. The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, rose 0.24 per cent to 97.41. *—PTI*

Manish Bajoria appointed CFO of BigBasket

NEW DELHI, 7 JULY

Tata group online grocery market, BigBasket on Monday announced the appointment of Manish Bajoria as its Chief Financial Officer. In this role, Bajoria will oversee all aspects of the company's finance function and play a key role in shaping its financial strategy as it enters its next phase of development and innovation, BigBasket said in a statement. Earlier, he served as CFO at Vini Cosmetics, where he led end-to-end financial management and played a pivotal role in the company's digital transformation, it added. Bajoria brings 20 years of experience in strategic finance, commercial management, and digital transformation across diverse sectors. He has also held senior finance leadership roles at Amazon and Hindustan Unilever. He began his career at Tata Steel and is a Chartered Accountant. *—PTI*

Kalyan Jewellers revenue up 31% in FY26 Q1

NEW DELHI, 7 JULY

Kalyan Jewellers on Monday reported a 31 per cent year-on-year increase in consolidated revenue for the first quarter of the fiscal 2025-26, despite multiple pauses in demand, majorly due to volatility in gold prices and geopolitical tensions. The company had reported consolidated net revenue of Rs 5,557.63 crore in the first quarter of the 2024-25 fiscal. India operations saw 31 per cent revenue growth during Q1 of the fiscal 2025-26 compared to Q1 of the previous year, the company said in a regulatory filing. The revenue from global operations was up 31 per cent and contributed 15 per cent to the consolidated revenue in Q1. The revenue from Middle East operations was up 26 per cent, while the digital platform Candere recorded 67 revenue growth during Q1. *—PTI*

Capgemini buys WNS for $3.3B, eyes AI biz model

Rising demand for autonomous AI prompted acquisition

BENGALURU, 7 JULY

France IT company Capgemini reported acquiring WNS, a business process services (BPS) provider for USD 3.3 billion, to build a global powerhouse in Artificial Intelligence (AI) controlled business functions, on Monday.

According to Agence France-Presse (AFP), a news agency, the boards of the two companies mutually agreed upon the deal in which WNS' share value is set at USD 76.50 per share, a 28 per cent dividend over its average trading price of 90 days.

Capgemini is a company which focuses on IT consulting and digital transformation assistance.

Capgemini is set to utilise the rising demand for autonomous AI that can perform its tasks and make business-related decisions without any dependence.

Aiman Ezzat and Keshav Murugesh *PHOTO: CAPGEMIN*

Capgemini CEO Aiman Ezzat told AFP, "Capgemini's acquisition of WNS will provide the group with the scale and vertical sector expertise to capture that rapidly emerging strategic opportunity created by the paradigm shift from traditional BPS to agentic AI-powered intelligent operations."

The WNS started its services to British Airways during the late 1990s, with its headquarters situated in London with its second office in India. WNS is also listed on the New York Stock Exchange.

The company now provides services in various sectors and is known as the fundamental player in the BPS sector.

WNS CEO Keshav Murugesh said, "Organisations that have already digitised are now seeking to reimagine their operating models by embedding AI at the core, shifting from automation to autonomy."

Capgemini said that this addition will bring forth more opportunities and improve the company's financial status.

A joint statement said that in order to buy and take over the existing debt of WNS, Capgemini has arranged USD 4.7 billion in bridge financing. *—Agencies*

JioBlackRock MF raises over ₹17,800 cr via NFO

NEW DELHI, 7 JULY

JioBlackRock Asset Management Pvt Ltd, a 50:50 joint venture between Jio Financial Services Limited (JFSL) and BlackRock, on Monday announced closure of its maiden New Fund Offer (NFO), recording a total investment of Rs 17,800 crore.

The fund was mobilised from three cash/debt mutual fund schemes – JioBlackRock Overnight Fund, JioBlackRock Liquid Fund and JioBlackRock Money Market Fund.

The three-day NFO, which was launched on 30 June, 2025, attracted investments from over 90 institutional investors, reflecting confidence in JioBlackRock Asset Management's value proposition that combines data-driven investing and a digital-first approach, the fund house said in a statement.

The cash/debt mutual fund schemes also recorded an overwhelming response from retail investors, with over 67,000 individuals investing in these funds during the offer period.

The NFO, which closed on 2 July, 2025 was one of the largest in India's cash/debt fund segment, placing JioBlackRock Asset Management among the top 15 asset management companies by debt assets under management in the country, out of 47 fund houses, it said.

These first funds offered by JioBlackRock Asset Management provide a broad range of investors choice to manage different elements of cash and short-term allocations, and put cash to work for meeting differing liquidity, risk and return objectives, it said.

Short duration debt and money market mutual funds are a solution for investors looking to get yield by holding lower-volatility and short-term funds, without locking into a long-term commitment and providing clients with the flexibility to meet their liquidity needs. *—PTI*

Akasa Air, GMR Aero partner for Boeing project

NEW DELHI, 7 JULY

Akasa Air has entered into a three-year agreement with GMR Aero Technic for base maintenance and support for its Boeing 737 MAX fleet.

Currently, the airline has 30 Boeing 737 MAX planes.

"Under the agreement, GMR Aero Technic will undertake scheduled base maintenance checks for Akasa Air's fleet at its state-of-the-art Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul facility, located within the GMR Aerospace & Industrial Park in Hyderabad," the carrier said in a release on Monday. Akasa Air connects 23 domestic and 5 international cities. *—PTI*

TRUMP'S DEADLINE LOOMS

Markets close unchanged amid US tariff cautions

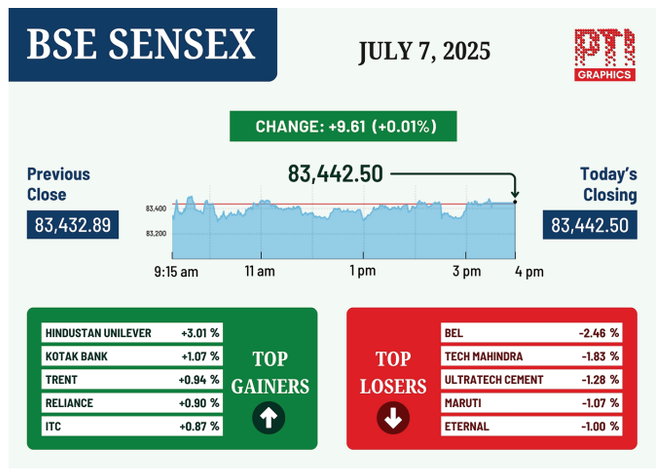


PHOTO: PTI

MUMBAI, 7 JULY

Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty closed almost unchanged on Monday in a highly volatile trade amid caution ahead of the 9 July US tariff deadline, weak trends in Asian markets and foreign fund outflows.

After oscillating between highs and lows, the 30-share BSE Sensex finally ended 9.61 points or 0.01 per cent up at 83,442.50. The index hit a high of 83,516.82 and a low of 83,262.23 during the day.

The 50-share NSE Nifty ended unchanged at 25,461.30 with 22 of its constituents settling higher and 28 in the red.

Gains in FMCG and oil shares were offset by losses in IT and metal shares.

Volatile trends engulfed markets amid concerns surrounding the US-India trade deal, experts said.

The 9 July marks the end of the 90-day suspension period of the Trump tariffs imposed on dozens of countries, including India. An additional import duty of 26 per cent was announced on Indian goods entering the US.

From the Sensex firms, Hindustan Unilever, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Trent, Reliance Industries, Asian Paints and ITC were among the gainers.

However, Bharat Electronics Ltd, Tech Mahindra, UltraTech Cement, Maruti and Eternal were among the laggards.

The BSE smallcap gauge declined 0.33 per cent and midcap index dipped 0.15 per cent.

Telecommunication dropped 1.24 per cent, BSE Focused IT (0.74 per cent), commodities (0.66 per cent), IT (0.65 per cent) and metal (0.60 per cent).

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 760.11 crore on Friday, according to exchange data. *—PTI*

India aims to double maize output by 2047: Agri Min

NEW DELHI, 7 JULY

India's Agriculture Minister, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, announced on Monday the country's ambitious target to more than double its maize output to 86 million tonnes by 2047, up from the current 42.3 million tonnes.

Shivraj Singh Chouhan *PHOTO: PTI*

Speaking at the 11th maize summit hosted by FICCI, Chouhan emphasised the importance of developing high-yielding seed varieties with increased starch content without resorting to genetically modified organisms.

Current average productivity is at 3.7 tonnes per hectare, with some states outperforming the national average, necessitating enhancement in overall yields. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research has developed various maize varieties, but further progress is required, particularly in starch levels, which Chouhan aims to increase to 72 per cent from the present 65-70 per cent.

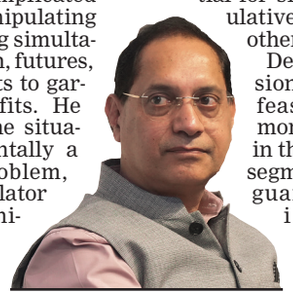
To support higher production, the Minister encouraged states like Punjab and Haryana, traditionally focused on paddy, to diversify into maize cultivation. Rising maize prices are expected to benefit farmers following the government's ethanol blending initiative, although concerns regarding the sale of substandard agricultural inputs persist. *—PTI*

Don't see many risks like Jane Street: Sebi chief

MUMBAI, 7 JULY

Tuhin Kanta Pandey, Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), has stated that the capital markets regulator does not currently perceive significant risks similar to those associated with the manipulation by hedge fund Jane Street. This comment follows a recent SEBI ruling that identified gains exceeding Rs 4,800 crore made by the New York-based hedge fund through dubious trading practices.

Pandey spoke to reporters shortly after the Sebi order emerged, which implicated Jane Street in manipulating indices by executing simultaneous trades in cash, futures, and options markets to garner extensive profits. He emphasised that the situation was fundamentally a surveillance problem, prompting the regulator to enhance its monitoring capabilities.



"We do not believe there are many other risks present," Pandey remarked in response to questions about the potential for similar manipulative practices by other investors.

Despite discussions about the feasibility of monthly expiries in the derivatives segment to safeguard retail investors, Pandey noted that there are no such plans at present. He asserted that any future steps to protect retail investors will be informed by data analysis.

With growing concerns regarding retail investor losses, Pandey indicated that Sebi would publish comprehensive data on retail investor performance in the derivatives market within the day. A prior Sebi study revealed that over 90 per cent of retail investors incurred losses, prompting targeted regulatory measures. *—PTI*

BIOCON ARM GETS UK MHRA NOD FOR BIOSIMILARS

NEW DELHI, 7 JULY

Biocon Ltd on Monday said its arm Biocon Biologics Ltd has received marketing authorisations from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) in the UK for Vevzuo and Evfraxy, biosimilars of Denosumab used in the treatment of bone-related diseases.

Vevzuo is authorised for the prevention of skeletal-related events (pathological fracture, radiation to bone, spinal cord compression or surgery to bone) in adults with advanced malignancies involving bone, Biocon said in a regulatory filing.

It is also authorised for the treatment of adults and skeletally mature adolescents with giant cell tumour of bone that is unresectable or where surgical resection is likely to result in severe morbidity.

On the other hand, Evfraxy is authorised for the treatment of osteoporosisit said. *—PTI*

Smartworks launches IPO amidst losses

NEW DELHI, 7 JULY

Smartworks Coworking Spaces Ltd has set a price band of Rs 387-407 per share for its Initial Public Offering (IPO) valued at Rs 583 crore. The IPO opens for public subscription on 10 July and will conclude on 14 July, with bidding for anchor investors starting on 9 July.

The company has revised its IPO size downwards, with the fresh issue decreased to Rs 445 crore from an initial plan of Rs 550 crore. The Offer for Sale (OFS) has also been reduced from 67.59 lakh shares to 33.79 lakh shares, resulting in a market valuation of approximately Rs 4,645 crore.

- Despite increasing revenue, Smartworks reported a net loss of Rs 63.17 crore for the 2024-25 fiscal year, up from Rs 49.95 crore the previous year. Revenue from operations rose to Rs 1,374.05 crore

Despite increasing revenue, Smartworks reported a net loss of Rs 63.17 crore for the 2024-25 fiscal year, up from Rs 49.95 crore the previous year. Revenue from operations, however, rose by 32 per cent to Rs 1,374.05 crore.

The proceeds from the IPO will primarily fund capital expenditure for new centre fitouts and loan repayments. Established in Gurugram, Smartworks manages 48 operational centres nationwide, focusing on mid-to-large enterprises. The company's shares are expected to list on 17 July on the BSE and NSE. *—PTI*

Drone to boost manufacturing to $23B: Report

NEW DELHI, 7 JULY

Buoyed by rising demand from sectors like defence, agriculture, logistics, and infrastructure, the drone industry is expected to boost the country's manufacturing potential to USD 23 billion by 2030, says a report.

As drones emerge as a key component of modern warfare strategies, India's Operation Sindoor in the wake of the Pahalgam terror attack has marked a notable shift in the country's adoption of drones, the report by Nexgen said.

The report, based on a survey of 150 companies from 15 cities, revealed that 40 per cent of drone companies believe agriculture and precision farming are anticipated to drive the largest demand for drones in India by 2030. Estimates suggest the global agricultural drones market size will reach USD 5.89 billion by 2030.

Organised by Nexgen Exhibitions, the Drone International Expo 2025 is showcasing the latest innovations from over 6 countries, including Russia, Taiwan, Canada, Ukraine, and India.

Over 50 national and international Drone manufacturers are showcasing their product innovations at the expo. *—PTI*

7.28% RISE IN TWO-WHEELERS

India's EV sales growth doubled in June '25: FADA

NEW DELHI, 7 JULY

The Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) on Monday reported approximately two times growth in the Electric Vehicle (EV) segment in June 2025 on a year-on-year basis.

According to FADA numbers, in June 2025, out of 100 passenger vehicles that came out on the road, nearly 5 vehicles were EVs, as compared to nearly 2 vehicles in the same month, the previous year. However, overall sales moderated in the month.

Specifically, in the two-wheeler segment, EV witnessed a month-on-month rise from 6.07 per cent to 7.28 per cent. And in the commercial vehicle segment, it witnessed a slight uptick.

Out of 100 passenger vehicles that came out on the road, nearly
5 vehicles
were EVs, as compared to nearly 2 vehicles in the same month the previous year

Additionally, FADA projects a cautiously optimistic outlook for the auto retail sector, anchored by a decisive uptick in government capital expenditure (capex) between June and August 2025, which is expected to strategically focus on roads, railways, metro infrastructure, and green-energy projects.

This strategic investment is poised to be a key driver supporting growth in the Commercial Vehicle (CV) and Construction Equipment (CE) segments.

June 2025 retail data already reflects this momentum. While overall MoM volumes declined 9.44 per cent, the CE segment registered a significant 44.98 per cent MoM and 54.95 per cent YoY growth, while CVs rose 6.6 per cent YoY despite a modest 2.97per cent MoM decline.

Also, the monsoon forecast of over 106 per cent of the long-period average, is expected to enhance rural liquidity and, by extension, drive demand across the auto spectrum, particularly two-wheelers and tractors. *—ANI*

PHOTO: PTI

Prithvi Shaw joins Maharashtra ahead of 2025-26 season

MUMBAI, 7 JULY

India batter and former Mumbai player Prithvi Shaw on Monday joined Maharashtra ahead of the 2025-26 season, the state governing body announced. Shaw had requested the Mumbai Cricket Association late last month to be granted a No Objection Certificate to leave Mumbai and play for another state, which was approved by the governing body. Shaw was dropped from Mumbai's red-ball teams owing to poor fitness and disciplinary issues and had last played for the domestic giants in the final of the Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 Trophy against Madhya Pradesh. "International cricketer and Indian team's dynamic top-order batter Prithvi Shaw has officially parted ways with the Mumbai—*PTI*

Jharkhand governor unveils Durand Cup Trophy

JAMSHEDPUR, 7 JULY

Jharkhand Governor Santosh Gangwar on Monday unveiled the trophy of the 134th Durand Cup, Asia's oldest football competition, which will kick off in Kolkata on 23 July. Twenty-four teams will be divided into six groups as they will fight for glory in the world's third-oldest tournament, to be played across five states West Bengal, Jharkhand, Manipur, Meghalaya, and Assam. The tournament will also mark the start of the new Indian football season.Jamshedpur will play host to Group C matches, which will have Indian Army, Nepal's Tribhuvan FC, Ladakh FC, and Jamshedpur FC, besides a quarterfinal on 16 August.—*PTI*

PHOTO: X/@ED FIORI

Ed Fiori, known for taking down Tiger, dies of cancer

FLORIDA, 7 JULY

Ed Fiori, who for 13 years was the only player to rally from a 54-hole deficit to beat Tiger Woods on the PGA Tour, died Sunday, the tour said on its website. He was 72. The tour said Fiori had been battling cancer. It provided no other details. A four-time winner on the PGA Tour, no victory was more memorable than the 1996 Quad City Classic, now the John Deere Classic. Three tournaments into his pro career, a 20-year-old Woods had a one-shot lead over Fiori going into the final round at Oakwood Country Club.—*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

ICC appoints Sanjog Gupta as its new CEO

DUBAI, 7 JULY

Indian media mogul Sanjog Gupta was on Monday named the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Jay Shah-led International Cricket Council (ICC), replacing Australian Geoff, who stepped down before the Champions Trophy earlier this year, citing personal reasons. Gupta, who was serving as the CEO (Sports & Live Experiences) at JioStar, will be taking charge of his new role with immediate effect. He will be the seventh CEO of the ICC, which said it received more than 2,500 applications from 25 countries from which 12 candidates were shortlisted.—*PTI*

I am always tempted to play Kuldeep: Gill

Stokes says tough to handle Bumrah at Lords

LONDON, 7 JULY

It is always tempting to have a wicket-taking spinner like Kuldeep Yadav in the playing eleven, but Washington Sundar was preferred for the Edgbaston Test against England to add batting depth after two lower-order collapses at Leeds, India captain Shubman Gill has said on Monday.

The debatable decision to include Washington in the eleven paid off as the left-hander chipped in with both bat and ball in different stages of the game. India will go to the Lord's Test with the same approach.

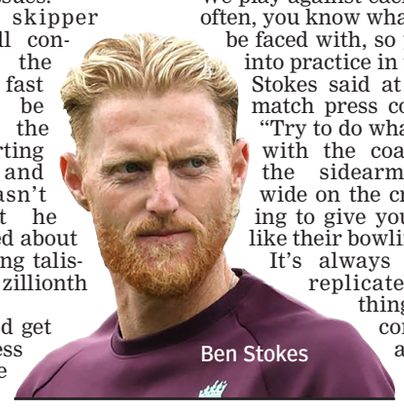
"It's very tempting when you have a bowler like Kuldeep. One of the reasons why I wanted to play Washington was because he gives us the batting depth," said Gill after India leveled the series with an emphatic win.

Jasprit Bumrah didn't play the second Test, and yet England received a sound thrashing and now Ben Stokes and his teammates will have to prepare for the premier Indian pacer's bagful of tricks at the Lord', which is difficult to replicate even in the nets, admits the home skipper.

England lost the second Test by 336 runs and the Indian team management didn't field its premier strike bowler due to workload issues.

Kuldeep Yadav and Shubman Gill
PHOTO: ANI

Indian skipper Shubman Gill confirmed that the world's best fast bowler will be back during the third Test starting July 10, and Stokes wasn't amused that he would be asked about the fast bowling talisman for the zillionth time.



Ben Stokes

"I thought I'd get through a press conference without being asked about Jasprit Bumrah. We play against each other so often, you know what you will be faced with, so you put it into practice in training," Stokes said at the post-match press conference. "Try to do what you can with the coaches and the sidearms, going wide on the crease, trying to give you practice like their bowling lineup. It's always tough to replicate something that will come down at you in a game. —*PTI*

Will England's 'Bazball' change at Lord's?

Putting additional focus on Lord's Test

LONDON, 7 JULY

England's preference for flat tracks to assist their aggressive style of play has produced mixed results for them in the Test series against India thus far, putting additional focus on the strip for the Lord's Test beginning on Thursday.

While India handed the hosts the series opener on a platter from a dominating position at Leeds, Shubman Gill, and Co. learned from their mistakes to out-bat and out-bowl the opposition on a slower surface at Edgbaston on Sunday.

Win the toss and bowl has been the template for Ben Stokes, but will that change going forward in the series? Will another batting beauty be dished out, or the expected return of Jofra Archer at the 'Home of Cricket' push Stokes to alter his plans?

More bounce and carry helped the England seamers at Leeds, while in the 'sub-continental conditions' of Edgbaston, Akash Deep and Mohammed Siraj got the new ball to move off the pitch significantly more than their counterparts. England would need to watch out for the threat posed by Akash Deep at the Pavilion End at Lord's, with the ball skidding a tad more than usual due to the downhill slope.

His senior partner, Siraj, has

fond memories of the hallowed ground, having played a major role in a famous win back in 2021.

England will need to come up with answers for Gill: Mark Butcher

Shubman Gill's technically sound game and serene temperament have left quite an impression on former England opener Mark Butcher, who feels the Indian Test captain has taken ownership of Virat Kohli's number four spot quite comfortably despite the "enormous scrutiny".

"And England will have to come up with an answer for him in that middle order, because they feel that you get past the top three or four...and then there are bounties to be had a bit further down the order," he said, referring to India's brittle lower-order. —*PTI*

BIGGEST AWAY WINS FOR INDIA

- 336 vs Eng Birmingham 2025
- 318 vs WI North Sound 2019
- 304 vs SL Galle 2017
- 295 vs Aus Perth 2024
- 279 vs Eng Leeds 1986

Winning at Edgbaston happiest memory whenever I retire: Gill

BIRMINGHAM, 7 JULY

Leading India to their first-ever Test win over England at Edgbaston will remain one of his "happiest memories" whenever the time comes to call it quits, said India captain Shubman Gill, revelling in the resounding series-levelling victory here.

For the 25-year-old whose captaincy stint began with India losing the series opener at Leeds, Gill underlined an all-round show from the team to make a strong comeback that was also the team's first win over the hosts in Edgbaston.

"This is something that I would cherish for the rest of my life; probably whenever I would retire, I think this would be one of my happiest memories," Gill said in a video shared by BCCI.

"I was meant to take the last catch of this match, and I am very content and happy with how we were able to finish this match. —*PTI*

Shubman Gill

Akash dedicates win to sister battling cancer

Every time I had the ball in my hand, her thoughts would cross my mind, said an emotionally overwhelmed Akash Deep as he dedicated his stellar performance in India's jinx-breaking Test win over England to his sister, who has been battling cancer for the past two months. Akash Deep's sister, **Akhand Jyoti Singh**, was emotional while reacting to her brother's heroic performance at Edgbaston. Akash Deep dedicated his match-winning performance against England to his sister, who is suffering from cancer.Don't worry about me, do well for India.

DHONI'S 44TH BIRTHDAY

MS Dhoni celebrated his 44th birthday on Monday with his friends and family
PHOTO: PTI

Diksha finishes 63rd, Lottie Woad wins Irish Open

KILDARE, 7 JULY

Diksha Dagar, who made her 11th cut in succession on the line, finished in a none-too-happy manner with a double bogey in a card of 4-over 77 at the 2025 Women's Irish Open at Carton House. She ended way down in Tied-63rd. She had rounds of 75-73-73-77 for a 6-over total. Diksha's teammates Avani Prashanth, Tvesa Malik, and Hitaashee Bakshi missed the cut. Amateur Lottie Woad stormed to a six-shot victory at the 2025 KPMG Women's Irish Open. The English star began the day leading by seven strokes after rounds of 68-67-67 on the first three days of action on the O'Meara Course. —*PTI*

Australia's victory in the 2nd cricket test against West Indies

ST. GEORGE'S, 7 JULY

Australia completed its recovery to win the second cricket Test against West Indies by 133 runs with a day to spare, clinching the series to retain the Frank Worrell Trophy.

Australia dismissed West Indies for 143 in 34.3 overs on Day 4 to take an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-test series.

On Saturday, half-centuries by Steve Smith and Cameron Green had helped to put Australia back in charge after the visitors lost early wickets in their second innings, at one stage slipping to 28-3.

After resuming Sunday at 221-7 and a lead of 254 runs, Australia was all out for 243, setting West Indies a tricky target of 277 for victory. Shamar Joseph took 4-66.

At 33-4, the West Indies' chase was in trouble. The match was over in the afternoon session. Left-arm pace bowler Mitchell Starc returned 3-24 from eight overs to lead the Australian attack. Josh Hazlewood took two

Australia's Mitchell Starc embraces captain Pat Cummins, right, after defeating West Indies on day four
PHOTO: X/@CRICKETAUSTRALIA

wickets and offspinner Nathan Lyon returned 3-42 from 5.3 overs to clean up the lower order. A six-wicket match haul moved Lyon to within one of Glenn McGrath at No. 2 on Australia's all-time list of leading wicket-takers.

Lyon has 562 wickets from 139 Tests dating back to 2011. McGrath took 563 in 124 Tests from 1993-2007. Shane Warne, the great legspinner who died in 2022, tops the Australian list with 708 wickets in 145 Tests from 1992-2007.

Captain Roston Chase top-scored for West Indies in the second innings with 34 before he was trapped lbw by Starc with a ball that kept low as it angled toward leg stump.

Australia 286 (Carey 63, Webster 60, Alzarri Joseph 4-61) and 243 (Smith 71, Green 52, Shamar Joseph 4-66) beat West Indies 253 (King 75, Campbell 40, Lyon 3-75) and 143 (Chase 34, Starc 3-24, Lyon 3-42) by 133 runs. —*PTI*

Djokovic stays in quest for 25th Grand Slam title

LONDON, 7 JULY

Novak Djokovic, the seven-time Wimbledon champion, showcased his grass-court mastery in a close round of 16 match against Australia's Alex de Minaur.

The Serbian, seeded sixth, entered Centre Court, having recently celebrated his 100th Wimbledon singles victory. His ability to neutralized de Minaur's speed set the tone for a match that highlights why he remains a formidable force at 38. Djokovic claimed a win with 1-6, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4. keeping his quest for the 25th Grand Slam and an eighth Wimbledon title alive.

Cobolli advances to quarter-finals

Flavio Cobolli edged out Marin Cilic 6-4, 6-4, 6-7 (4), 7-6 (3) on Monday. Italian Flavio Cobolli, the No. 22 seed, advanced to the quarter-finals of Wimbledon by edging out Croat Marin Cilic 6-4, 6-4, 6-7 (4), 7-6 (3) at the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club in London on Monday. —*PTI*

The winners of selection trials for the U17 wrestling World Championship with WFI President Sanjay Singh
PHOTO: PTI

Six Asian C'ship medallists win selection trials

NEW DELHI, 7 JULY

The Indian team picked for the U17 World Championship did not have many surprises, with as many as six medal winners from the recent Asian Championships acing the selection trials to make the national team here on Monday.

The Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) had restricted the trials to medal winners at the recent U17 National Championship, thus only the best wrestlers in each of the 10 categories competed, limiting the number of bouts.Haryana's Rachna Parmar (43kg), Delhi's Moni (57kg), Rajasthan's Ashvini Vaishno (65kg), and Haryana's Manisha (69kg), who won gold medals at the Asian Championships in Vietnam, emerged winners in their respective categories.Rachna got the better of Cheshta 3-0 in the final.

After losing a point on passivity, Cheshta tried the 'dhobi pachad' at least twice but lost a point on counter-attack as Rachna managed to take her down on one of the moves to come out a clean winner.

Cheshta had also won a medal at the Asian Championship a silver in 40kg but she chose to compete in 43kg on Monday.

The 65kg and 69kg weight class featured only two wrestlers each.

Ashvini beating Haryana's Taniya 2-0 in 65kg and Manisha pinning Delhi Bharti after taking a comfortable 4-0 lead. Anshika from UP missed out on competing in the 69kg as the officials did not allow her to weigh in because her passport is expiring in December this year, and a six-month validity is a must for a visa application.Even if she had won, she would not have traveled, so what's the point in her competing? —*PTI*

SHARPENING NET PLAY

Tanvi Sharma eyes upcoming two junior titles

NEW DELHI, 7 JULY

Rising Indian shuttler Tanvi Sharma says she needs to sharpen her net play to target bigger BWF events in the future, but her immediate goal is to clinch the Asian Junior and World Junior Championships titles this year.

The 16-year-old from Punjab became the youngest Indian to reach a BWF World Tour final when she finished runner-up at the US Open Super 300 tournament last month.

"It was an amazing week for me. I am happy about it. But now I am focusing on my other tournaments. I am hoping to do my best in Super 500 and 750 events as well," Tanvi told PTI in an interview on Monday.

"I think that week, I was very aggressive in my game. My movement was very fast and my smashes were very good. That motivated me a lot."

Tanvi didn't take long to make an impression after picking up badminton from her volleyball-playing mother Meera, who learned coaching basics to train Tanvi and her elder sister Radhika. She became U-15 and U-17 national champions before finishing runner-up in U-19 nationals in 2022.

Rising Indian shuttler Tanvi Sharma

Last year, the bubbly youngster won silver at the Asian U-15 Junior Championships in China, clinched the Kotak India International title, and finished runner-up at the Senior Nationals in Guwahati.

At just 15, Tanvi was part of India's gold medal-winning women's team at the Badminton Asia Team Championships and was also the youngest member of the Uber Cup squad in Chengdu earlier this year.

She is confident about her chances at the upcoming Asian Junior Championships in Indonesia from July 18-22 and the World Junior Championships to be held in Guwahati from 13-19 October. —*PTI*